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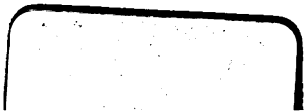
The Pennant Family

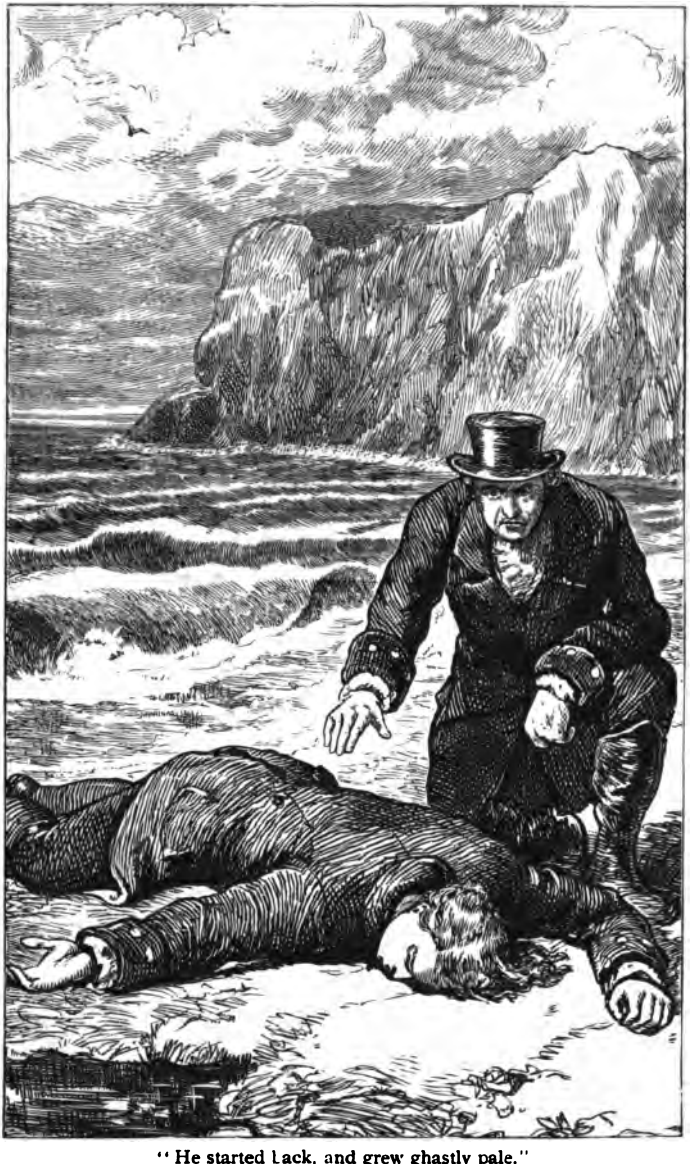
Anne Beale



THE PENNANT FAMILY.

"Upon that cheek and o'er that brow
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,—
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent."

BYRON.



"He started back, and grew ghastly pale."

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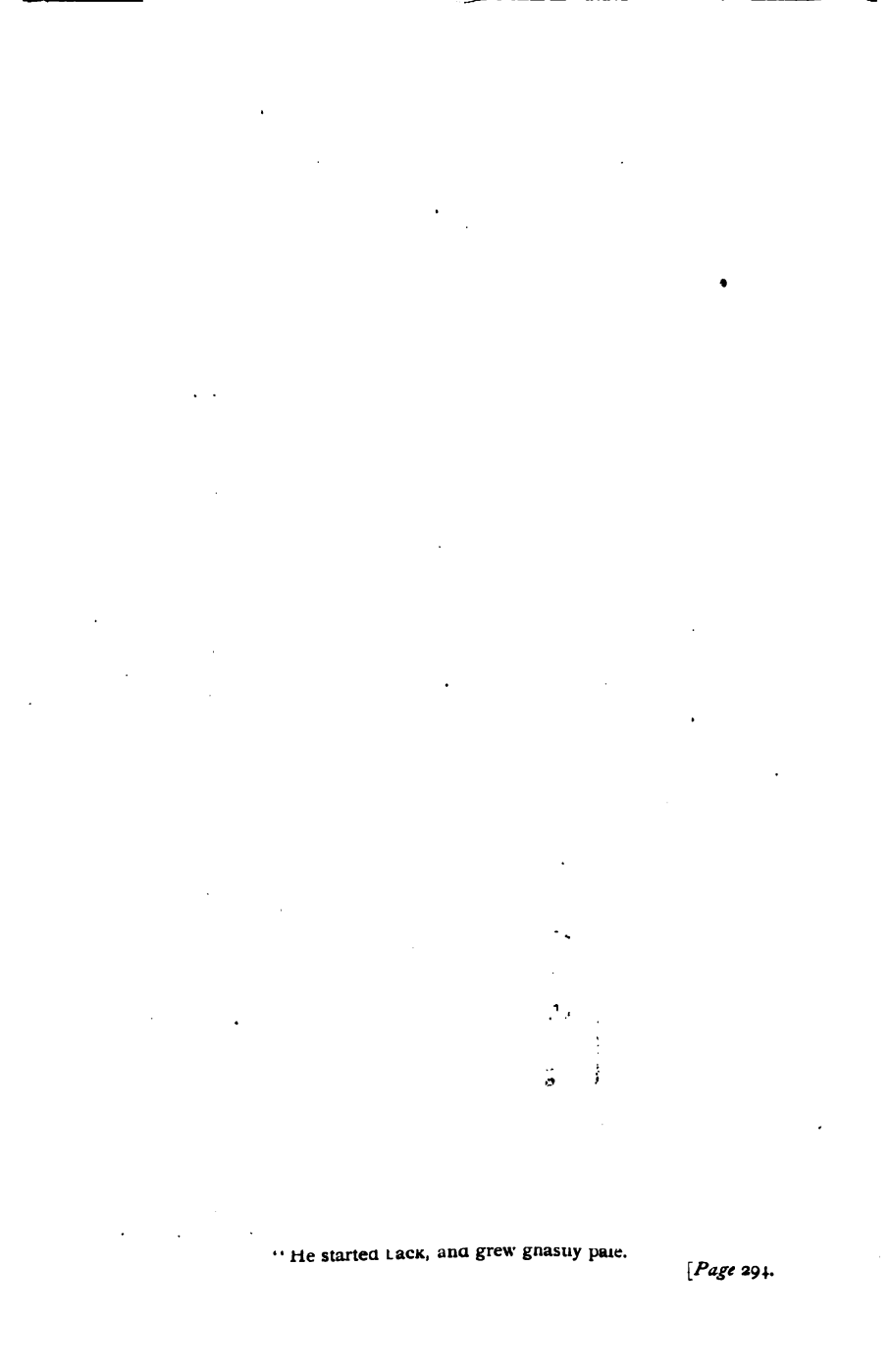

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THE PENNANT FAMILY.

BY

ANNE BEALE,

AUTHOR OF

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PREFACE.

THE story of the Earl of Craigavon is founded on fact, and may be read in the History of Glamorganshire under the heading "Dunraven Castle." What may appear incredible to the reader in these pages is strictly true, as far as the Earl is concerned, and tends to verify the well-worn saying that "Truth is stranger than fiction."

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CHAPTER I.

CRAIGAVON CASTLE.

THE Castle of Craigavon was an imposing structure on the Welsh coast. It was situated on a rocky promontory called the Megin, nearly a hundred feet above the sea, and dominated to right and left the bays of Ogof and Ton. The names were significant: Megin, or bellows, blowing the Ton, or wave, through the Ogof, or cavern, hollowed beneath the Castle by the persistent attacks of the sea. As the bays were deeply indented, the promontory stretched far out into mid-ocean, and the situation of the Castle was, consequently, singularly wild and romantic. Towering cliffs, coloured like the rainbow, surrounded the bays, from the summit of which lofty hills rose skyward. Although the Castle itself was almost bare of vegetation, fields and woods appeared where the promontory joined the mainland; and the Lord of Craigavon ruled, not only the sea, but the hill-side. He was, literally, "monarch of all he surveyed."

It was said that Craigavon Castle originally belonged to a British king, but that, as time went on, a Norman knight gained possession of it, from whom the present Earl was descended. He, as Lord of the Manor, received not only tenths and tithings from his tenants, but the waifs and strays cast up by the sea. As the coast was notorious for the horrible practice of wrecking vessels, these waifs formed a considerable portion of his income. There were quicksands not far from Ton Bay, which were certain destruction to any ship that

struck on them; therefore, before philanthropists built lighthouses and established lifeboats, the Lord of the Manor gathered a fine harvest from the perilous sea.

And the sea at that particular spot was generally perilous. Besides the quicksands, there were great rocks hidden beneath its treacherous breast, which were as sure, as the jaws of the fabled monsters of old to break up or engulph the unfortunate vessels that happened upon them. It was a playground of demons visible and invisible. The visible demons were the wreckers, who allured by false lights the ships' crews to death; the invisible, the devil and his angels urging on the visible.

On a dark night, years ago, a storm brooded over the Megin and its bays. The Castle faced the west, and, while deep in shadow itself, looked upon the last rays of a lurid sunset. More than one vessel was dimly visible on the perturbed horizon, and an occasional flickering streak of light showed that they were tossed about in the distant waves. People were watching in some of the Castle windows until the sun went down and "darkness settled on the face of the deep;" then an uncertain gleam flickered here and there from the frowning towers, until darkness veiled them also.

But there was a moving light upon the cliffs. This was not unfrequently seen there of a stormy night; and the Welsh, then a more superstitious people than now, believed it to be a corpse-candle—a portentous sort of *ignis fatuus*, that presaged the death of some dweller amongst the mountains. It certainly flitted strangely from place to place, seeming most conspicuous on the elevated and dangerous points. Although the night was threatening, the storm still kept at a distance, an occasional far-off peal of thunder, with its messenger flash of lightning, being its precursors. It was curious to see the meteor flit about, and difficult to imagine what it would appear to the crews of the distant ships.

At last the storm came down, but the heavy rain did not extinguish the corpse-candle; and such peasants, farmers, or fishermen as chanced either to be abroad, or to glance from

their houses, would silently wonder which of them was next to be borne to the old churchyard in the glen. As the tempest increased, the waves rose higher and higher, dashing with impotent fury against the impregnable rocks, and bounding through the great caverns underneath the Castle, which they had themselves excavated.

In a momentary lull of the storm, there came a signal of distress from the sea. Another and another sounded through the dreary darkness. Minute-gun on minute-gun echoed with the echoing thunder, and, without timely aid, it was evident that the ship whence they came was doomed.

Meanwhile, the wandering light on the cliff became stationary, as if in confirmation of the superstition respecting it. A sudden flash of lightning revealed a ship battling with the waves, beneath the cliffs and near the quicksands, opposite the glare of the meteor, which presaged the death of many instead of one, and had possibly drawn towards it the ill-fated vessel. But no sooner were cries of distress audible from the sea than it moved again. It now went steadily onwards over the cliffs towards Craigavon Castle, disappearing when it neared the promontory, where the cliff path terminated the road that led to the Castle, but reappearing from time to time as the road ascended or descended. The prophetic gleam was pitiless indeed, for, just as a shrill cry of despair echoed across the bay, it vanished into the great quadrangular battlemented court of the Castle, leaving behind, around, above, and beneath, the utter darkness of night.

CHAPTER II.

THE TEMPEST.

WHILE the storm was raging, the inmates of Brynhafod, or the Hill Farm, were engaged in reading the Bible. Old Farmer Pennant sat at a round table in the chimney-corner, with the Book of Life before him. He was a hale man, though over seventy, and if his hair was white, his voice was still clear, and he read without spectacles. His daughter-in-law was seated opposite, her knitting in her lap, her head slightly bent, her eyes closed. She was dozing under the influence of a huge wood fire that flamed and crackled on the hearth. Her husband, young Farmer Pennant, as he was called, sat erect on the corner of a settle, opposite his father, a grave, attentive look on his fine face. Caradoc and Michael Pennant, their sons, were near their mother, on low stools in the chimney-corner, the arm of the elder placed protectingly round the neck of the younger. Marget, a middle-aged servant, in Welsh costume, with a high beaver hat surmounting her snow-white cap and pinners, sat bolt upright, her eyes fixed like pole-stars on the reader. She was at the extreme end of the settle, nearly opposite the fire. Close to her, in an old-fashioned arm-chair, was Benhadad, the farm man, and at his right, Benjamin, the ploughboy—known as Big Ben and Little Ben—who both slept at the farm.

When the weather was tempestuous, old Farmer Pennant always chose the 107th Psalm. Just as he read the words, "They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end," Caradoc started from his seat, exclaiming,

"The gun! Grandfather, I hear the gun!"

"Let us pray," said the old man, interrupting himself in his reading, and kneeling down.

All the family knelt with him.

"Lord, have mercy on those who go down to the sea in ships. Make the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof be still," he prayed, in the fine, ancient language of his country. Then, rising from his knees, he added, "Now, come with me all of you, except the women and Michael."

"Oh, grandfather, let me go also!" pleaded Michael.

"Thou art too young and too delicate, my lad," was the reply, and Michael shrank behind his mother.

"Let them go without you to-night, father; it is such a tempest!" said Mrs. Pennant.

"I am well and hearty," was the rejoinder, as men and boys hurried in search of lanterns.

"Heart alive, mistress; you may as well try to move the nether millstone!" ejaculated Marget, as she brought a great coat and insisted on putting it on the old master.

They all went from the large, warm, light hall into the cold, dark passage. The wind and rain burst in as they opened the door, and with them the echo of the distress-signal. The men went out into the night, leaving the women and Michael on the door-sill.

"Ah, there it is! Look, mistress! See you the corpse-candle down yonder by the Castle? They'll all be lost! Lord a'mercy upon us! They are lost, for the candle has gone out!" cried Marget, in breathless terror.

Mr. David Pennant, Caradoc, and little Ben hurried through the silent garden and farmyard, followed by the old farmer and the man. Although nothing but "darkness was visible," they knew their way too well to miss it.

"Moses! Shon! Come out! Bring the ropes!" they shouted, like Stentors through the storm, as they passed the hut where the carter and shepherd—two brothers—dwelt together.

These men were soon on their track, for they were well

accustomed to similar calls. The farm was a surer haven for shipwrecked mariners than the inhospitable bays.

"Where is Gwylfa?" asked Mr. David Pennant.

"He was off with the storm, father; he never waits for the gun," replied Caradoc.

"The Earl will have fine spoil to night. I'm afraid the vessel is on the quicksands, and we shall be of no use," said David Pennant, stumbling down the rocky path. "I wish his lordship would give us a decent road, and we should have a better chance of saving life; but he thinks of nothing but saving money. How dark it is!—and how it pours!"

"Hark! father; I heard a cry. We shall be too late!" said Caradoc.

On they went by the dim light of four lanterns, while the storm came heavily down. The almost impassable mountain-road led to Ton Bay. An occasional flash of lightning revealed the rocks on either side, and the roar of the sea below mingled with the howl of the storm. It was an awful night.

"God help them!" ejaculated the old farmer; "but sailors are better prepared than most of us. Ben, Moses, we must all be ready for death!"

"Yes, sir," replied the two men, who were on either side of their master, lanterns in their hands, the light of which scarcely guided them over the stones.

When the first detachment reached the bay, it was dark as Erebus. The lanterns barely served to show the fury of the waves as they leapt up the cliffs and promontory, and dashed like an invading army of wild horsemen into the bay. Some huge creature suddenly jumped upon Caradoc.

"Gwylfa! All right, old boy. What have you found?" said the lad.

It was a large Newfoundland dog, trained to save life, when possible, and named "Gwylfa," or "Watch." He and his young master were close to the waves in a moment. The horn lantern was turned towards the beach in the vain hope of finding a human being, while the dog sat watching the sea.

"Let us climb the cliffs, father," cried Caradoc; and father and son, each with a light, mounted a dangerous rocky path, and stood with their lanterns extended as beacons towards the open sea.

A sudden flash of lightning showed them a mast and part of a sail in the offing.

"She is on the quicksands! and there is a light in my lord's tower," said David Pennant, in a hoarse voice. "We must watch for the boat. Go down and send up Big Ben; he is taller than thou, and can hold the lantern higher."

Caradoc obeyed, and, while the two men held the dim signals aloft, rejoined Gwylfa on the beach.

It would be difficult to say how long they watched silently, while the tempest continued to rage around. Mr. Pennant and Ben, up the cliff, sheltered by a ledge of rock, more than once thought they saw a boat on the crest of a wave, while the old farmer and the other servants, under cover of a cave, imagined cries of distress.

A sudden bark, and Gwylfa was in the sea, struggling with the waves and the darkness. Caradoc ran to the cave to call forth the men with the ropes.

"He has seen something!" cried the lad, hurrying back.

There was a momentary lull, and the clouds parted above the bay. A faint gleam of moonlight appeared between, and showed Gwylfa on the crest of a wave with something in his mouth. The sea raged up the beach and tore back again, the dog still battling with the waves. The envious clouds reclosed, and all was again darkness.

"Have mercy, O Lord!" ejaculated the old farmer, while Caradoc stood breathless with suspense, holding his light aloft, and the others shouted, "Courage, Gwylfa! Halloo, good dog! Here we are!" as if the fine fellow had ears of Midas.

Five minutes appeared five hours; but God heard the old man's prayer and guarded the adventurous Caradoc, who, in his eagerness, had advanced too near the waves, as if to let his dim light pierce through them, and was covered with foam

and lifted off his feet. He felt himself knocked down, and in another moment was conscious that Gwylfa must have done it while striving to land. He regained his footing while the big wave receded, and he and the dog again stood together on the beach. Both retreated for safety. Caradoc felt a paw on his shoulder, and then knew that Gwylfa had sunk down breathless while dropping something at his feet. But he had lost his lantern.

The thunder rolled overhead, and kindled the lightning by the friction of his chariot-wheels. Successive flashes darted across the beach, and revealed to Caradoc something white. He raised it with a sort of tender terror. By this time the others had come with their lanterns, and, as they gathered round the boy, the feeble glimmer, together with the fitful lightning, showed the white face of a child.

One of the men instantly took some sort of woollen shawl from beneath his outer garment, and wrapped it round the little limbs.

"I can carry him," said the boy, resolutely, and was on the way to the farm before the others knew it.

He was followed by one of the men, who could not, however, overtake him. Happily he knew the road as well by night as day, and even took a path across a field to shorten distance. The storm was abating, and the moon struggling to light him, as he bore his burden bravely through the night.

He burst in upon his mother and Marget with the words, "It is not dead!—it is warming!—take it, mother! The big tub—the boiler—hot water!" Then he sat down exhausted on the settle.

Mrs. Pennant received the flannel bundle, while Marget ran to Caradoc.

"Ach, they'll all be killing themselves!" said Marget, angrily. "Take this posset, and go to bed directly."

Caradoc drank a portion of some steaming mixture that Marget took from the hearth, roused himself, and staggered to his mother. She was seated on her low stool in the chimney-

corner, stripping the drowned child of a wet nightgown, and murmuring,—

"Dead! Merciful Father! Poor innocent!"

It was a little girl, with face and limbs of marble, and fair hair, wet with brine.

"Get a bath directly, Marget!" said Mrs. Pennant, beginning to chafe the small white feet. "Give me yonder blanket, Carad."

The women had already made preparations for an emergency, so no time was lost. The child was first enveloped in the blanket, then laid on the hearth, and gently rubbed by Mrs. Pennant, while Marget and Caradoc drew in a clean, white tub from the dairy. Two large, steaming kettles hung on their hooks over the flaming logs, one of which Marget seized, covering her hands first with her woollen apron. Its boiling contents were soon poured into the tub, and then mitigated with cold water.

"Now go you to bed. We don't want two corpses in the house at once!" said Marget, imperatively, to Caradoc, who was shivering.

"Let me know that she is not dead, and I will go," replied the boy, his teeth chattering.

Mrs. Pennant placed the little rigid form in the hot water, while tears coursed slowly down her own pale cheeks.

"Don't fret, mother: she is not dead!" whispered Caradoc, putting his wet sleeve round her neck and kissing her.

"It's all coming over again—there's no peace!" muttered Marget, leaving the hall, but soon returning with bread and milk, which she stirred vigorously in a saucepan over the fire.

"She breathes, mother!" whispered Caradoc, himself breathless.

There were, indeed, signs of returning animation. A little hand moved in the water, a tiny white foot rose and fell, a faint cry was heard. They put some warm milk between the small, blanched lips, and it disappeared. At last the pretty eyelids, that lay like snowdrops on snow, were uplifted, and a pair of

blue eyes looked for a moment at Mrs. Pennant; then the snowdrops drooped again.

"Mamma!" murmured the child; and, "Thank God!" ejaculated Mrs. Pennant.

When Caradoc at last consented to go to bed, the little girl lay in his mother's arms asleep.

"May I kiss her, mother?" he asked. "She is like our little Phœbe."

He kissed her and his mother, and went to bed, followed by Marget, who had unhung the shining brass warming-pan and filled it with burning ashes, in order to warm his bed.

Mrs. Pennant and the child were left awhile alone. The good woman let her tears have way. She had lost five children, the last an only girl, who had been taken by the Father when about the age of the little rescued one on her lap. She had been a melancholy woman ever since, and had not been able, like her husband, to say, "Thy will be done." Whose was this treasure thus suddenly brought to her?—and what of the mother who had lost her? Would she, too, be rescued from the waves and take refuge in the farm? This last thought recalled the-men who were still at the bay to her mind. She roused herself, and began to consider what she should do with the little girl. Moving, she awakened her.

"Mamma! Ayah!" murmured the child, looking dreamily around.

Mrs. Pennant raised her, and gave her more hot milk; but she was too weak to hold up her head, and soon fell back into a sort of stupor. Marget returned with the warming-pan, and it was settled that she should be laid in Mrs. Pennant's bed. Shovelling more ashes into the brazier, Marget preceded her mistress up the old oaken staircase, and into a large bedroom, in which were a capacious bedstead and two small cribs. Marget opened the bed-clothes, inserted the warming-pan, and moved it up and down with a will.

"There! Name o' goodness, what next?" she cried. "I wonder when we shall be in bed! and who's to get up at cock-

crow that goes to sleep at bulls'-noons? The child can't sleep in a blanket. There's purty she is! Look you at the chain and charm round her neck; I'm thinking it's gold. I'll be getting one of little Phœbe's nightgowns."

"No, Marget, no. Take the warming-pan away; your master doesn't like it," said Mrs. Pennant; and she was once more alone with the little girl.

Phœbe's nightgowns! Yes. Of what use were they locked up in yonder drawer? Still it was not a nightgown, but one of Michael's shirts that she drew forth, and hurried downstairs to air.

Returning, she drew it gently over the slumbering child, and then wrapped a plaid shawl of warm, native wool about her. While doing this, she examined the chain and locket, containing hair, which hung round her neck, and which had attracted Marget's attention. They were of fine, delicate workmanship, and diamonds and pearls ornamented the back of the locket. Mrs. Pennant bent over the little girl, and her motherly kiss seemed to restore colour to the white cheeks. The smile of infancy crept into a dimple, and the lips unclosed, revealing baby teeth. Mrs. Pennant said a verse of a simple hymn that she had been accustomed to repeat the last thing at night over her own infants, but which had not escaped her since little Phœbe's death. Smoothing the golden hair that lay upon the pillow, she kissed the child again, and went to visit her boys.

"Mother!" exclaimed Caradoc, "is there anything the matter? Are they come back? The storm has ceased."

The lad looked flushed and restless, and could not sleep. His eager black eyes sought his mother's, and he seemed satisfied with their quiet, if tearful expression. Michael lay sleeping tranquilly by his side. He was pale and delicate-looking, and the mother was always anxious about him.

"It was well he did not go, mother," said Caradoc. "But I wish I were at the bay. Gwylfa saved her, but I brought her to you. Do you think she will live? We will keep her for ever, instead of Phœbe."

CHAPTER III.

THE EARL AND THE FARMER.

THE following morning sunshine smiled upon land and sea. The throes of Ocean had ceased, and he slept long after sunrise. There was no trace on his treacherous breast, as he lay bathed in golden light, of the mischief he had done. Ogof and Ton, his twin children, so riotous the previous night, lay at rest, giving for signs of life only the sweet ripples of their breathing slumber. Even the frowning towers of Craigavon Castle were crowned with light, and as for the hills and cliffs, they were aglow with colour, for the phosphorescent lias of the limestone rocks sparkled like many-hued gems.

As Mr. Pennant had been the last to leave Ton Bay when the tempest raged, so he thought to be the first to visit it when calm. But he was mistaken. The Earl of Craigavon was there before him, seeing to his rights. His lordship was an early riser, so it was not surprising that he should have descended the private path from the promontory to the bay soon after sunrise. Still, he was pretty sure wreckers had been there first, for the sea had not, as usual, cast up any of the treasures of the deep. He was neither greeted by the grim faces of the drowned, nor by what the shipwrecked had possessed. The tide was tolerably far out, so the sands might have been strewn with spoil; but they were not. Either the ship had got off, or been wholly engulphed; but such results were unusual on that coast. The Earl wandered from rock to rock, his hands behind his back, glancing through the great cave, up the cliffs, towards the quicksands, and across the bay;

all was tranquil as the sky above. Doubtless the wreckers had been before him.

The Earl of Craigavon was about forty years of age. He was tall, as regarded the number of feet he actually stood, but shortened by his gait. He had a habit of stooping forwards as if in search of something, and usually kept his eyes on the ground. Those eyes were keen enough when raised, but rarely looked you in the face. They were of that greenish grey attributed to cats' eyes, and his enemies said that he had with them the feline gift of seeing in the dark. People called him and his cast of countenance aristocratic, because he was well-made, thin, had a hooked nose, pale face, colourless lips, a military moustache, a reserved manner, and unapproachable deportment. He was feared by his inferiors, and little understood by his equals. This descendant of the Norman conquerors was not more popular with the sturdy descendants of the ancient Britons than his ancestors had been with their forbears. Indeed, at that time Norman and Celt had not begun to love one another. How should they? They spoke different languages, and there were neither railroads nor national schools to bring them together. Certainly, the Earls of Craigavon should have lived out antipathy during the hundreds of years they had possessed the lands; but they had not done so. Indeed, they, like many an interloper of the present day, had not tried.

Mr. David Pennant, who appeared suddenly at the bay, was a man of another type. Tradition declared that the Pennants were descended directly from the old British king who once owned the Castle, and hence the somewhat lordly name—Caradoc. Indeed, they possessed a long piece of parchment, the writing on which was partly obliterated, which seemed to prove that tradition was correct. Be that as it may, they had held the farm of Brynhafod by interminable leases from time out of mind; and hitherto no Earl of Craigavon had been able to turn them out. The present lease, however, was to expire in a dozen years or so, and the neighbours sometimes asked

one another whether the Earl would be likely to grant a new one to David Pennant, who was as stiff, proud, and independent in his way as his lordship was in his. This was apparent in his gait, as he swung down the road and along the sands, followed by Gwylfa. He was a dark-eyed, florid, good-looking man, and, although dressed in his rough farmer's suit of fustian coat and corduroy breeches, showed at a glance that he was made of sterling metal.

"Where's the wreck, Gwylfa?" he exclaimed, as he stood to contemplate the scene. Then, perceiving the Earl, added, under his breath, "Looking for squalls, as usual."

Lord Craigavon turned at the sound of his voice.

"Morning, Pennant," said the Earl in Welsh.

"Good morning, my lord," said the farmer.

The Earl spoke the language, but not readily. The farmer spoke no other.

"A bad storm last night," remarked the former, his eyes on the ground, as usual.

"Terrific, my lord! We were here, for we heard signals of distress. Either the ship went down, or was got off by a miracle. I fear she went down out there by the quicksands."

"How so, since nothing has been cast up?"

"The salvage will be Gwylfa's, my lord. He was so happy as to bring a little girl to land, who is now high and dry up at our place. She is a waif at your lordship's service; but the good dog, not the wave, landed her."

Lord Craigavon frowned as he met the farmer's eyes for a moment, then glanced at the dog.

"You have trained him to some purpose."

"Yes, my lord! he has saved many a life, and is a better Christian than the wreckers. How is their devilish trade to be stopped? I don't think they profited by it last night."

The Earl made no reply, but looked from the dog to the beach.

"Shall we send the child to the Castle, my lord?" con-

tinued the undaunted Pennant; "she belongs to your lordship as a portion of the wreck."

"By no means—send her to the workhouse!"

"Your lordship will have nothing to do with her?"

"Certainly not. I keep neither sailors nor their brats!"

"Only their goods and chattels, my lord; you have the best of it. What hast found, Gwylf—another baby?"

The dog had seen something floating in the sea, and had dashed in after it. Lord Craigavon's glance followed him. At this moment two boys appeared—one from the Castle, the other from the farm-roads. They were Lord Penruddock, the Earl's only son, and Caradoc. Gwylfa came dripping from the water, and laid his stray at his young master's feet, who stood irresolute at the entrance to the bay. Caradoc stooped to pick up a large doll.

"This is really dead," he said, laughing.

The doll's eyes were closed, the colour washed off its face and lips, its crisp locks straightened, its muslins and satins wet and discoloured.

"A most deplorable infant, indeed! Why, Gwylfa, you have excelled yourself!" exclaimed the young lord, joining Caradoc.

"She must have lost it when she was drowning," mused Caradoc.

"She—who?"

"The little girl Gwylfa brought in last night."

"What do you mean? Tell me all about it!"

Lord Penruddock spoke and understood Welsh better than his father, so he readily comprehended Caradoc's rapid tale. Before it was ended, the Earl and Mr. Pennant joined them, to see what Gwylfa had brought in. The former frowned; the latter smiled. Caradoc raised his cap to the Earl, who, however, took no notice of him.

"Another waif, my lord. Shall we send it to the Castle, or workhouse?" laughed Pennant.

"Oh! sir, may I take it to the little girl?" said Caradoc,

addressing the Earl for the first time in his life, who did not, however, deign to reply either to father or son.

"Of course you may. Mona has a houseful of splendid dolls, and wouldn't care for that drowned rat," said his son instead, whose will was law.

Lord Penruddock was about Caradoc's age and size, but of very different face. He was fair and delicate-looking, while the young farmer was dark and strong. His manner, although slightly authoritative, was not unpleasant, and he was, at least, more gracious than his father, and managed to meet the eyes of those to whom he spoke. His own were blue, and when he was in a good humour, their expression was lovable, but when he was out of temper—well, perhaps the less said of them the better, as, indeed, of such eyes in general. Had he been less indulged, and not allowed to believe that he could command the world, he would have been a clever, pleasant boy. As it was, all yielded to his slightest nod, and he could command neither the world nor himself. He was fond of Caradoc, showing his affection in a queer, lordly way: now taking him out to fish or hunt with him, anon ordering him to do things at which Caradoc's independent spirit rebelled. Caradoc, or Carad, as he was familiarly called, had all his father's pride, and his hot Welsh blood rose at the slightest indignity, either to himself or his kith and kin.

"I shall bring Lady Mona to see the little girl," said Lord Penruddock.

"Why are you abroad so early?" asked his father.

"Caradoc Pennant is to show me an eagle's nest, and where the lias fossils lie, while the tide is out," replied the young lord.

The Earl glanced appealingly at David Pennant, but did not dare to oppose his son.

"Excuse me, my lord," interrupted the farmer, addressing Lord Penruddock; "but Carad must come home to breakfast, in order to be ready for school; and I forbid him to go to the eagle's crag with your lordship. He may risk his own life, but not yours?"

The faces of the two boys flamed—one with anger, the other with shame.

"But he shall go!" cried Lord Penruddock. "Come along, Caradoc, to the eagle's nest."

"I must not! But I will show you the fossils this evening; father won't mind that," rejoined Caradoc.

Mr. Pennant beckoned his son away, and they returned to the farm, the others to the Castle.

"I hate that Farmer Pennant," said Lord Penruddock, heartily.

"So do I; he is a conceited fool," returned the Earl.

"Why don't you send him off?"

"He has a lease of the estate. I wonder what became of the wreck last night? We must send watchers to the beach. They shall not defraud us of our own."

"Who?—the Pennants?"

"Possibly. They are all alike. Did you hear a cry?"

"Why are you always imagining cries by night and day, my lord?" asked the boy, irritably. "It is only a sea-gull. But, father, I think the Pennants are honest, and I don't really hate them. They are not wreckers. It is those low, mean, cowardly brutes that live down at Monad. I should like to exterminate them. Let's fire a few cannon down upon them from the cliffs."

A servant in livery appeared with a message.

"Some fishermen have come up, my lord, to say there is wreckage cast ashore below Ogof Bay, and they are waiting your lordship's orders."

The Earl's moody face broke into a grim smile. "Tell them I am coming," he said, and hurried up the steep, followed by his son, who muttered,—

"Wreckage, waifs, strays—I am sick of the words. They shall never be used when I am Earl of Craigavon."

CHAPTER IV.

THE FOUNDLING.

THE sacred drawer in Mrs. Pennant's bedroom was unlocked with trembling fingers; but that good woman stood long before it ere she pulled it out. When she did so at last, she sank on her knees and burst into tears. "Phœbe, my child! my darling!" she cried, looking upwards, as if to explore the heaven where her little one dwelt. Then she rose and turned towards the bed where the foundling lay. The child was still asleep. There was colour on her cheeks and lips, and a slight wave in her fair hair, giving promise of future curls. One chubby little hand lay close to her cheek and mouth on the pillow, which drew from Mrs. Pennant the words—"How strange! little Phœbe sucked her thumb." This fact seemed to give her courage to return to the drawer. She drew out its contents slowly, one by one, while her tears fell upon them, and her sobs broke the stillness of the chamber. She tried to repress them, however, for the sake of the living child who was to wear the pretty clothing of the dead. There was true pathos in her act and manner. As she touched each tender memorial of the mortal now made immortal, she kissed it, and then laid it reverently on the snowy covering of the chest. One white frock particularly affected her; but this was replaced, for it had been the christening frock—that baptismal robe in which, as infant, her child had been marked with the sign of the cross. By degrees she grew calm, and she was surprised to feel that the effort she had made had relieved her of a burden that had hung about her for four years—the burden of a suppressed grief. Everything belonging to her little Phœbe

had been hidden from her sight, because her friends feared lest the melancholy that seized upon her should end in loss of reason; and so her mind had preyed upon memory, until all she did had become mechanical. The touch and sight of what had belonged to her child had removed the machine, and laid bare the waters that worked it. In all cases, what is natural is best, and wisdom lies in thinking and speaking of those who have gone before us as if they were still among us—which, virtually, they are, in the "communion of saints."

A call to breakfast broke in upon her hallowed grief. It was followed by the entrance of Caradoc. He started back at the sight of his mother's tears and his dead sister's clothes.

"Mother, *fach* (dear), what are you doing?" he said.

"Oh! Carad, I am better—so much better!" she sobbed. "It is for the child: they will fit the little orphan."

Caradoc kissed his mother, and they went together to look at the foundling.

"How pretty she is! Look at her dimples! She is laughing in her sleep!" he cried, ecstatically, and awoke the little sleeper.

She glanced from one to the other, inquiringly at first, then with a sort of terror in her blue eyes. The dimples disappeared, and she began to cry.

"Mamma!—where is mamma? Ayah, I want mamma," she said, sitting up and looking about her.

"What does she say?" asked Mrs. Pennant.

"She is an English child, and we cannot understand her. I will learn English at once—this very day," answered Caradoc; "I am ashamed that I know so little of it."

Mrs. Pennant tried to soothe her in Welsh, but the strange tongue startled her. She responded, however, in one still stranger. It was Hindostanee: and the mixture of ancient Eastern and ancient Western speech would have delighted a philologist, but greatly puzzled all the speakers. Caradoc left the room, while the child was crying pitifully for her mamma, and returned bearing her doll. The sight of it brought back

the smiles. She outstretched her little arms, and Caradoc, enveloping the doll in a shawl that lay on the bed, put the damp burden into them. She embraced it, and began to rock it maternally.

"Go down to breakfast, and send Marget up with the child's," said Mrs. Pennant.

Marget nearly let fall the tray when she appeared, at the sight of Phœbe's clothes.

"Name o' goodness, what's all this?" she exclaimed, looking anxiously at her mistress, whose face reassured her.

The little girl hid hers behind Mrs. Pennant at the sight of Marget in her short petticoats, tucked-up flannel skirt, and high hat.

"Bo-peep!" cried Marget, setting down the tray, and also putting her face behind Mrs. Pennant.

In after years, when Marget described the scene, she was wont to say, proudly,—

"The words came to me natural-like, but I never knew where I learnt them, unless it was at the castle."

She had twice in her life been within the walls of that baronial seat.

"Bo-peep!" repeated the child, clapping her hands.

A new-laid egg, fresh milk, and dainty brown bread and butter, further distracted her from her grief. Mrs. Pennant broke the egg, and was about to feed her, when she lisped, "Daisy tan do it."

She took the spoon gently from Mrs. Pennant, and began her breakfast with evident appetite, while the kindly women watched her.

"She eats and drinks like a little lady," said Marget, as the child again politely declined aid, and taking up the cup of warm milk in her chubby hands, drank with avidity. "Go you down, mistress, and show the master how bright you look; and have your breakfast below, while I stop here. The butter's come, and I'm not in a hurry."

Mrs. Pennant obeyed meekly, as she had been in the habit

of doing during her illness; indeed, she had been, so to say, almost set aside, while Marget had assumed the reins of government. She found her mankind in earnest conversation; for Caradoc had been detailing how he had seen her surrounded by little Phœbe's clothes and in tears.

"The Lord be praised!" was old Mr. Pennant's exclamation as his daughter-in-law entered the hall.

Her husband rose from his breakfast to meet her, in order to conceal his own emotion; for, strange as it may sound, he had prayed for those "tears" by night and by day. He led her to her seat, and began to talk cheerfully.

"The Earl will have nothing to do with the child, so we must keep her till she's claimed, mother," he said. "His lordship likes the dead better than the living."

"She is just Phœbe's size, and she sucks her thumb," returned innocent Mrs. Pennant; and her friends could not have been more delighted had she told them the child was cased in guineas.

"Moses says the wreck has been cast up, father, and they are busy carrying the things to the Castle," said Michael.

"Then we shall hear no more of them: the Earl manages to hide his treasures, like a miser that he is!" rejoined Caradoc.

"Thou must not speak ill of thy elders and superiors: remember thy catechism," said his grandfather gravely; and Caradoc was silent.

The breakfast-table was well supplied. The men had mugs of good ale, or *cwrw da*, as they called it, the boys basins of steaming porridge, and Mrs. Pennant alone her tea. That beverage was not so universal then as now, and much more expensive. Large rashers of bacon and fried potatoes, oatmeal and wheaten bread, tempting butter, and a cut-and-come-again cheese, were spread on the board, which was covered by a cloth of home-spun damask. In those days the spinning-wheel turned in every farm and cottage, and oh, how long its fabrics lasted! Home-made linen and woollen became heirlooms, and never wore out.

"Now to school, boys!" cried the farmer, when Caradoc had wound up his porridge by potatoes and bacon, and the more delicate Michael by bread and butter. But they were stayed in their ready obedience by the entrance of Marget with the little girl in her arms, dressed in Phœbe's best blue frock. She had spread it out before the child, who had shown instant signs of a desire to put it on; so she had washed and dressed her quickly, and brought her down, feeling instinctively that the sooner it was all over the better.

The child glanced round the hall with a bewildered air. She had her doll in her arms—sole relic of her past. Her bright, fair face and golden hair contrasted with Marget's bronzed cheeks and black hat, and they were a picturesque couple. It may be observed that Marget lived in her tall hat, declaring that she took cold in her head when she left it off. As the inmates of the hall crowded round the child, she began to cry, and hid her face on the woman's shoulder.

"Mother, why have you dressed her in Phœbe's clothes?" asked the sensitive Michael with tears in his eyes.

A sob from Mrs. Pennant was the answer, at the sound of which the little girl looked up.

"Don't ky," she said, holding out her hands to her new friend, who took her in her arms, bending her head to conceal her emotion.

"May God bless you both!" prayed old Mr. Pennant, laying his hand reverently on the head of the twain.

And so the foundling was adopted at the farm.

CHAPTER V.

THEIR LADYSHIPS.

LATER in the day, Brynhafod was honoured by a visit from the Countess of Craigavon and her daughter, the Lady Mona Rhys. As this was a rare event, Mrs. Pennant was much disturbed, the more so as they were accompanied by a maid, who acted as interpreter on such occasions, and whom Mrs. Pennant did not like. When she opened the door, she had the little girl by the hand, who accompanied her to the parlour, whither she conducted her visitors, and stood by her, gazing inquisitively, but not rudely, at them.

"Pray sit down, Mrs. Pennant," said Lady Craigavon, waving her hand towards a seat; and Mrs. Pennant obeyed the sign mechanically, not understanding the words.

The Countess was a tall, erect, elegant woman of about five and thirty. She had been, and indeed still was, a beauty. Her complexion was of surpassing delicacy and fairness, her features regular, her figure faultless. But her face lacked expression: the light blue eyes might have been turquoises, the lips a folded pink shell, for any life they possessed. She was always magnificently dressed. On the present occasion she wore a rich blue silk pelisse trimmed with swansdown, and a black velvet hat with a plume of ostrich feathers. The Lady Mona was a pale child dressed in white, with a pink sash and a pink wreath round her broad straw hat. She carried a small white French poodle in her arms, and was altogether a dainty figure. Mrs. Morris, the maid, stood behind her ladies, and looked stiff and sly, in her plain lavender suit. Morris would

have patronized Mrs. Pennant, but the Pennants would not be patronized either by great or small; and were wont to declare that they knew their place, and wished to associate neither with my lord nor his lackeys. It was on this account that there were frequent disparaging remarks made of the family of Brynhafod in the housekeeper's room at the Castle.

"I wish we had this view instead of our dreary prospect," said the Countess, glancing out of the bow-window, in which she had seated herself. She was always wishing for what she had not.

The view was indeed beautiful. The farm lay on the crest of one hill and at the foot of another. In front was an old-fashioned garden filled with pinks, polyanthuses, lavender, wallflowers, and other sweet and hardy plants; while below the garden stretched pasture-land, down-land, and wheat-fields, as far as the cliffs that overhung the sea. It was spring, and all was as fresh and green as Mother Nature could make it. Mountain sheep wandered over the downs, their frisky lambs at their sides, and the cattle grazed peacefully, rejoicing in food and sunshine. The sea, with the red and white cliffs, bounded the horizon, and the blue sky laughed overhead. The music of a brook sounded near at hand, though its waters were not visible from the window.

"Puff! Puff! Is it Puff?" cried the foundling, suddenly, running from Mrs. Pennant's side to stroke the dog in Lady Mona's arms.

The creature growled.

"No—it ain't Puff," she added, turning to Mrs. Pennant.

"Who are you? What is your name?" asked Lady Mona, while the child retreated to Mrs. Pennant, and stood looking steadily from the Countess to her daughter.

"Have 'ou dot mamma?" she asked at last. "Where Ayah?"

"Come to me, and I will tell you," said the Countess.

The child, who seemed strangely observant and staid for her years, went cautiously.

"Interpret what she says to Mrs. Pennant, Morris," said her ladyship to the maid.

"What is your name?" asked the Countess.

"Daisy. What is 'our name? 'Ou 'ike mamma?"

"Daisy. *Llygad y ddydd*—the eye of day," grimly translated Morris; for such is the Welsh of the "wee, modest, crimson-tippèd flower."

"Where is your mamma, little girl?"

"In the big sip."

"And your papa?"

"Pappy far, far away!"

The child sighed and pointed across the sea.

"Was Ayah your black nurse?"

"Ayah dood. I 'ove Ayah."

She ran to Mrs. Pennant, and looked at her appealingly, then climbed into her lap and began to cry.

"Her parents must be gentlefolks, mamma," remarked Lady Mona. "How pretty she is! She shall come to the Castle."

"The Earl would object," said Lady Craigavon.

"His lordship need not know," was the dutiful rejoinder; and Morris did not interpret this portion of the conversation.

The Countess and her daughter rarely styled the Earl husband, or father. In truth, they feared, but they did not love him.

"Tell Mrs. Pennant to let her come and play with me and Miss Manent, Morris," said Lady Mona. "You shall fetch her."

The little girl nestled closer to Mrs. Pennant, and seemed to look on the visitors as intruders.

"I on'y do to mamma and Ayah," she said.

Any resistance always strengthened Lady Mona's will; and she condescended to rise and take her dog to the child, by way of conciliation.

"It's name is Blanche, little Daisy, and not Puff."

"Tank 'ou—pretty Blanche!" said the little girl, politely, stroking the dog.

"Lord Penruddock tells me your eldest son is very clever, Mrs. Pennant," said the Countess. "What does your husband mean to make of him?"

"A Christian man, I hope, my lady," was the reply, satirically rendered by Morris.

"Oh! of course; I mean as to—to trade, or—or profession."

"A farmer, I hope, my lady."

"And the second a harper, I hear?" pursued the Countess, glancing at a Welsh harp in one corner of the room. "He might replace Blind David at the Castle."

"I hope he will also be a farmer, my lady. He only amuses himself with music," said Mrs. Pennant, respectfully.

But Morris translated it with an intonation expressive of offended pride, and the Countess drew herself up haughtily.

Poor, unconscious, timid Mrs. Pennant nervously stroked Daisy's pretty head. As nothing more was to be extracted from the child, the ladies rose to go. Mrs. Pennant accompanied them through the garden, and a path skirting the farmyard, to the road, where their carriage awaited them. Daisy clapped her hands when she saw the horses, and began to talk Hindostanee. Then she ran towards a powdered footman, as if expecting a friend, but drew back disappointed at sight of a stranger. The ladies shook hands with her, and nodded to Mrs. Pennant as they got into their carriage, ordering the coachman to drive to Penruddock—the nearest town. And the four horses picked their way with some difficulty over the rough road that led into the highway—for the Earl and Countess of Craigavon never appeared with less than four horses—while Mrs. Pennant said, thankfully,

"That is over. They came out of curiosity to see thee, little *Llygad y dydd.*"

CHAPTER VI.

A BLACK WAIF.

THE path by which Caradoc and Michael usually went to school lay over the cliffs and downs. When the tide was out they sometimes walked along the beach, which way, though rather longer, was more interesting to Caradoc, on account of the fossils in the limestone cliffs. He had imbibed a taste for geology from his master, and was making a collection of the ammonites and other curiosities embedded for thousands of years in the lias.

It was not, however, ammonites that took the boys round the beach on the morning after the storm, but the hope of seeing something of the wreck. Their way lay through the wretched fishing-village of Monad, if, indeed, the half-dozen huts it contained could be called a village. It was aptly named —the word Monad signifying a solitary place. It was lonely enough, and out of sight of all other human habitation. The miserable dwellings were huddled together on the highest point of the beach, which the sea rarely reached, and were mostly amongst the cliffs, that proved effectual shelter from the north-east winds. Neither wind nor sea could carry off the odour of fish and pigstyes that pervaded the spot, or cleanse the fishermen and their families. The spot had a bad reputation, and people avoided it, not only because the inhabitants were said to be wreckers, but on account of many ridiculous stories and superstitions that had probably been promulgated by them to prevent discovery.

The Earl had, however, done his best to circumvent them by building a watch-tower on a neighbouring height, in which

he placed a man to give information of wrecks. Although Monad was out of sight of this Twr Aran, or tower on a lofty place, the immediate beach was visible to it, and thus arose a constant petty warfare between the inhabitants of the tower and Monad. A wretched little public-house stood in the centre of the huts, which purported to give "shelter to man and beast," but which rarely, if ever, was known to take in a shipwrecked mariner. Nothing was ever heard of such as were unfortunate enough to be wrecked near Monad, though the Pennants and other respectable farmers shrewdly suspected some few sailors at least must have been cast ashore alive.

"What have you got there, Davy Jones?" exclaimed Caradoc, as he and Michael reached the bit of sand that lay beneath the beach on which the huts were seated. "The figure-head of a ship—a blackamoor, I declare! What will the Earl do with that?—stick it up among the antlers in the great hall?"

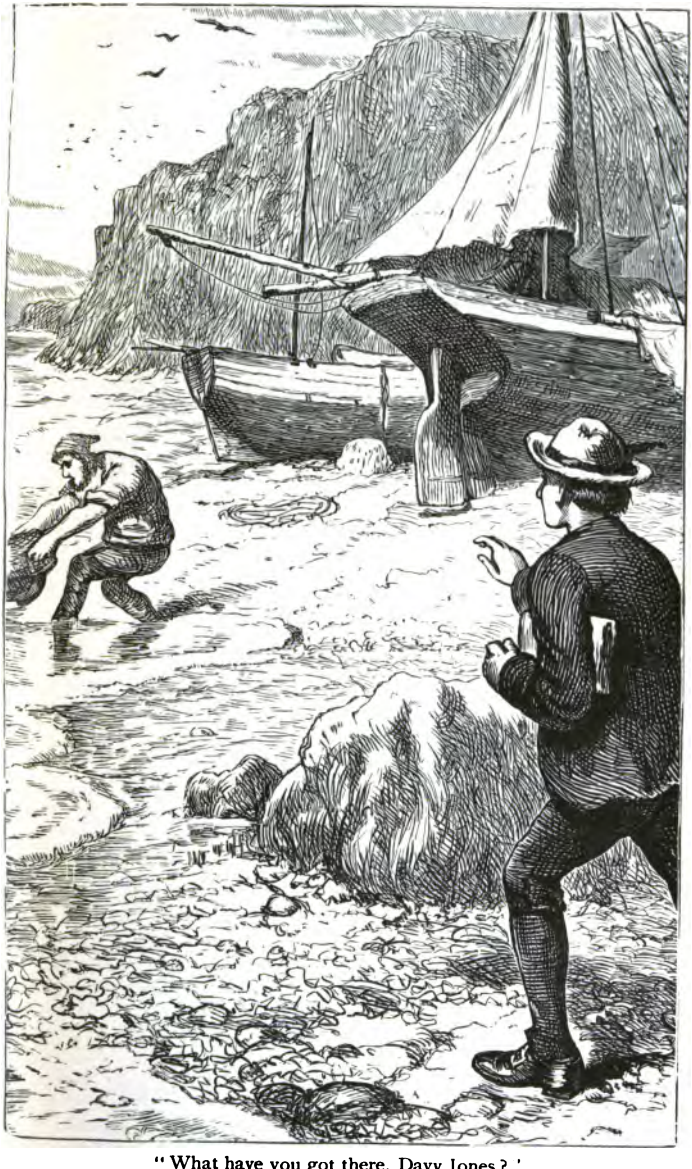
This was said to an evil-looking man who was trying to haul the said figure-head up to the beach.

"I'll be bound the ship was called *Cleopatra*," continued Caradoc. "I'll ask the master to come down and see it. What else have you got, Davy?"

"Nothing, young master. The Earl will be angry enough," replied Davy Jones, scowling at the lads.

"There's Gwylfa lugging in something for you!" cried Caradoc.

The good dog always accompanied his young masters to school, then returned to the farm, and fetched them at the appointed hour. He was with them now, and, having espied a dark object beneath a retreating wave, he dashed after it, followed by one or two men who were hanging about the beach. They all knew Gwylfa, and feared him almost as much as the Earl—for he would surrender no waif save at command of a Pennant. He and the men together brought in a small box, over which he mounted guard until Caradoc and Michael joined him. The men, and half a dozen ragged women and



"What have you got there, Davy Jones?'

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children, who had come forth to see the boys, crowded round the box. Caradoc examined a brass plate that was nailed to the lid, and read the name "Wyndham."

"Perhaps it belongs to the little girl, Carad," said Michael.

"Perhaps it does—but she'll never get it," replied Caradoc. "Look ahead, Davy Jones! There's the Earl, and Lewis the keeper, and goodness knows who besides!"

This announcement caused the women to scuffle off to the huts, and the men to slink away, as the Earl and his followers appeared round a projecting rock. Unfortunately the boys were compelled to pass them.

"What are you doing here?" growled the suspicious Earl.

"We are going to school, my lord," said Caradoc.

"School! Where? There's no school. You all lie alike."

"We go to Mr. Ap Adam, my lord."

"You all try to rise above your station, you Welsh. Mind you, if you take Lord Penruddock to the eagle's cliff, I'll make the schoolmaster flog you."

"I shall not take his lordship," said Caradoc, proudly.

He passed on, followed by Michael, but they lingered until he heard the Earl order his men to carry the chest to the Castle, and sell the figure-head for firewood. They hurried on to make up for lost time, until they reached a ravine between the hills and rocks, down which flowed, or rather dashed, a mountain-stream into the sea. It was called the Aber, or confluence. Its banks were beautifully wooded with oak and birch, and there was a picturesque path on one side, up which the boys ran. Aran tower stood on an elevated point of the opposite bank. At the top of the ravine, in a lonely nook, was the old church of Llanafon, through the churchyard of which the boys ran, breathless from fear of being late. This church and churchyard were subjects of great interest to Caradoc, who had been initiated into their antiquity by his master. The church had been originally an old British structure, built, it was said, before St. Augustine preached in Britain. It had been added to respectively by Saxon and Norman, and con-

tained some curious mural paintings, an old Lady Chapel, a Norman font, and some strange tombs. It was dilapidated and damp, and more interesting to the antiquary than to the Lord of the Manor, who neither frequented nor restored it. There was a private chapel attached to the Castle, and the chaplain, who was also vicar of the parish, and tutor to Lord Penruddock, lived at the Castle.

The Vicarage house was as damp and dilapidated as the church, and tenanted only by rats and mice, until a Mr. Ap Adam appeared on the scene, and, to the surprise of the neighbours, took possession of it. Hither Caradoc and Michael hastened after they had passed though the churchyard.

The Vicarage was rendered picturesque by its situation and the thick ivy that covered it. In itself it was only a small stone house, containing two parlours, a tiny study, and some four or five bedrooms. But it was backed by hills that were almost mountains—had the cliff, on which stood Aran Tower, on the right, from which it was separated by the dashing waters of the Aber; downs on the left; and the sea in front. It stood a little above the church, and outside the dingle that enclosed that sacred edifice.

The boys opened a rickety wicket-gate; ran through an untidy garden and a weedy path; passed beneath an old stone porch in which were two broken seats; entered a small, brick-flagged hall, where they hung up their caps; and finally appeared, breathless, in the presence of their master, Mr. Ap Adam. When they disappeared within the right-hand parlour, Gwylfa quietly turned tail, and retraced his steps to the beach.

"We are sorry we are late, sir," said Caradoc, frankly; "we came round by Monad to see the wreck, and there was the most curious figure-head of a ship you ever saw cast up—a black woman with gold earrings and necklace; you said Cleopatra was black, sir. The Earl says it is to be cut up for firewood."

Mr. Ap Adam looked up from a book that lay before him. He was seated at the top of a deal table, at either side of

which were two forms, each long enough to hold three or four boys. There were three lads on one of them; the other was empty, until Caradoc and Michael took possession of it. The open window was opposite the master.

"Cleopatra was not the only black woman in the world, physically or morally, even if she was black, which nobody has positively ascertained," said Mr. Ap Adam. "We know that Antony and other men made fools of themselves on her account, and that we needn't imitate them in that particular. Begin your lessons."

Mr. Ap Adam was a thin, slight man, with sharp, shrewd features; he wore spectacles, through which peered a pair of keen black eyes, surmounted by bushy black eyebrows; he had on a shabby black coat, but his linen was scrupulously clean. All that was known of him was, that he was a scholar and antiquarian, who had visited those parts on account of the rare fossils and curiosities they contained, and had remained, he said, because of the beauty of the neighbourhood. He had fallen in with Caradoc, and, becoming interested in him, had told his father that he ought to educate him.

"We have no scholar near us," said Mr. Pennant.

"I am what they call a scholar, and therefore poor," returned Ap Adam; "if I could get six boys, who would pay me ten pounds a year apiece, I would turn schoolmaster. The terms are high for the country, but I have a smattering of everything—from Homer to Glendower; from King Arthur to King George; from the Deluge to the Welsh coal mines. Will you give me your sons, Mr. Pennant, and help me to some more pupils?"

"Are you a God-fearing man, sir?" asked the farmer.

"I hope so," returned the scholar, reverently, uplifting his hat.

"Then I will consult my father. What is your name, sir?

"My name? Well, one must have a name—what do you think of Ap Adam? We are all sons of Adam, and the prefix Ap merely states the fact that I am one of them."

"A very respectable name, sir," laughed the farmer.

"You must take me upon trust. All I can say of myself is that I go to church, and desire to be let alone."

So, as it happened, did Mr. Pennant; and, after a few preliminaries, and a long conversation between old Mr. Pennant and Ap Adam, Caradoc and Michael went to school. They were the first pupils, but before the year was out, four others were found. Mr. Ap Adam had now been established three years, and people said of him that "there was nothing he didn't know; and if his scholars had anything in them, he'd be sure to bring it out."

"I hope they have all had the small-pox, then," he remarked, on hearing this.

He had lately lost one pupil, which accounted for the vacant place on the form.

"If you please, sir, I should like to learn English," said Caradoc, suddenly, unable to fix his attention.

"What next, and why?" asked the master, peering over his spectacles. "You know enough already for your needs."

"Because we have a little English girl who was saved by Gwylfa from last night's wreck, and she understands none of us," replied the pupil.

"Talk English to her. Nothing like conversation to acquire a language. Begin by pointing out visible nouns until you master the English, and make her learn the Welsh of them at the same time. You will thus kill two birds with one shot. Come to me for the connecting links of verbs and prepositions."

Caradoc was obliged to be content and to pursue his various studies. Finding him unusually clever, the master did not spare him, but taught him many things that the little world around them deemed unnecessary. Mr. Pennant, however, was well pleased that his son should be better informed than himself, although he was not deficient.

After the morning school was over, the boys went home to dinner, and Mr. Ap Adam wandered down to Monad, and for

a few shillings purchased the figure-head, which the fishermen managed to convey to his house. One of the inmates of Aran Tower descended from his height to watch proceedings, but understanding that the Earl had ordered the black lady to be chopped up for firewood, he pocketed Ap Adam's silver and let him have it. Ap Adam, as a virtuoso, had a fancy for keeping it, reflecting that, as sculptors had been known to fall in love with the statues they had executed, it was just possible that he might expend some of his hidden fire on this, his Cleopatra; for, black as it was, the figure-head was remarkably handsome. He accordingly placed it in an empty room and locked it up.

But he carefully examined such weekly newspapers as reached him, in the hope of seeing something of a lost "Cleopatra," and even sent an advertisement to a local paper concerning it under a feigned name. In those days there was no cheap literature, and penny newspapers had not been even imagined, so Ap Adam, as well as his neighbours, was obliged to be content with *The Welsh Chronicle* once a week, and such information as it contained. None reached them of the ill-fated vessel in question, or, indeed, of any others wrecked on the same notorious coast.

Ap Adam had barely time to swallow his frugal meal of bread and cheese before his boys returned for their afternoon lessons.

"We have begun, sir!" exclaimed breathless Caradoc, who arrived first.

"What? A lighthouse on the Esgair?" asked Ap Adam, whose digestion had been impeded by thoughts of wrecks.

"No, sir, but English and Welsh. Daisy—her name is Daisy, sir—has told me the names for everything we had at dinner; I have learnt most of them; but——"

"She won't say the Welsh, sir," interrupted Michael. "She is as obstinate as a pig."

"That is just what the English say of the Welsh, my lad, when they answer them with a *Dim Saesoneg*—'no English.'

They say you are as obstinate as pigs, because, when language was confounded at Bel or Babel, your ancestors and theirs wandered different ways, and, in course of generations, a very unpronounceable guttural was transmitted to this part of the world. A fine language all the same, and certainly old, if that is an advantage. There is a Welsh and English dictionary and grammar on the shelf, Caradoc, that you may take to help you; and if you like to bring the child here sometimes, I will talk to her, and so keep up her English."

"Thank you, sir. She is the most beautiful little girl you ever saw in your life," replied the boy.

Ap Adam smiled, and Caradoc wondered why his face became suddenly serious and sad.

After lessons, the boys returned home over the cliffs. They were, as usual, accompanied by Gwylfa. They were met suddenly by Lord Penruddock.

"Now, Pennant, show me the eagle's nest," began his lordship. "I have no time to lose, for I have escaped from Mr. Tudor, and he will be as cross as cross keys."

"I am very sorry, my lord, but my father has forbidden me," replied Caradoc.

"Fiddlesticks! I heard him; but you must come all the same."

"I promised the Earl, also, this very morning," urged Caradoc.

"It is no business of the Earl's. I say you shall come—now—at once!"

Lord Penruddock went a few steps towards a beetling cliff that overhung the others, on the summit of which was the eagle's nest, already visited by Caradoc; but the young Pennants did not stir. He returned, and seizing Caradoc by the sleeve, tried to drag him up the slope. Gwylfa was upon him at once, and, reckless of nobility, had him by the leg.

"Down, Gwylfa! Off, sir! Are you not ashamed?" cried Caradoc, shaking himself loose from Lord Penruddock's grasp, and threatening the dog with his fist.

"You vile brute! I don't know which is worse, you or your master!" exclaimed Lord Penruddock, rubbing the calf of his leg, while Gwylfa growled at him. "But I am your master, and I order you to come with me," he added to Caradoc.

He was pale with rage, and in part with terror; for he had felt Gwylfa's teeth.

"I cannot go with you, my lord," said Caradoc, decidedly. "My own father and your father have forbidden me."

"Then I will push your brother over the cliff, and tell the Earl you set your dog upon me," said his lordship, moving towards Michael, who shrank to Caradoc for protection.

They were not far from the edge of the cliff, and Caradoc saw that the boy was in earnest. He had barely time to place himself between his brother and the precipice before the threatened push was given. It recoiled on the giver, and, but for Caradoc, Lord Penruddock might himself have been over. Caradoc saw the danger at the onset, and, while grasping Michael firmly with one hand, seized the infuriated lad with the other, crying to Gwylfa, "Hold him—hold him fast!" The dog obeyed; and between them they checked the impetus of the movement. It was a moment of imminent danger to all.

"Run home quickly, Michael!" gasped Caradoc, impelling his brother upwards, and dragging their enemy from the brink of the cliff. "Let go, Gwylfa," to the dog.

"I shall not leave thee, Carad," replied Michael, stoutly; and Gwylfa loosed the boy he helped to save.

Caradoc did not let go, however, until they were safe on the down, amongst the furze-bushes. Then he said, as calmly as he could, but with a touch of irony, "I have set the dog upon you to some purpose, my lord. He has saved your life. Let us thank God for it!"

The young Pennants had been taught to give praise to the Lord for all His mercies; and following, not only this teaching, but a natural impulse, Caradoc clasped his hands, and added

aloud, "We thank Thee, O Lord, for protecting us from danger, and pray Thee to forgive us our evil tempers, for Christ's sake. Amen."

Lord Penruddock looked on—angry, terrified, surprised, and, perhaps, ashamed. He was imperious and passionate, but not altogether bad. Gwylfa also looked on, as if he understood the whole proceeding. It was, however, quite new to Lord Penruddock; for although his tutor's precepts were good, the examples set at the Castle were bad. Something in his face attracted Michael, who was too young quite to understand their difference of position. He crept up to him, and fixing his soft, lustrous eyes upon him, said, appealingly, "Make friends with Carad, my lord. I know you didn't mean to push me over—I don't mind."

Lord Penruddock's face softened for a moment, and he hesitated. But pride overcame the transient better feeling, and he exclaimed, haughtily, "Friends! What next? Insolent farmers! I will be revenged for this. You shall not defy the Earl of Craigavon's son for nothing!"

"Come away, Michael. There is Mr. Tudor, my lord," said Caradoc, his proud spirit rising at these words: and so the lads separated.

CHAPTER VII.

DAISY AT THE CASTLE.

IT was Saturday afternoon, and a half-holiday, when the next visit was paid by an inmate of the Castle to the farm. Caradoc was seated near the big hall-table, with Daisy on his knee. He had Mr. Ap Adam's Welsh and English dictionary and grammar outspread before him, and was resolutely trying to master the English language by their help and Daisy's lisping words. The child was already beginning to talk Welsh, as children will any language, if they have quick ears, and want to make themselves understood. Her eager speech became a strange medley of Welsh, English, and Hindostanee; but Caradoc patiently puzzled over which was which, until he separated the parts in some measure.

Daisy was apparently much troubled by her desire to please Caradoc on the one hand, and to listen to Michael, who was strumming out a Welsh air on his harp, on the other. Not even her doll, which she held in her arms, kept her little head still. It turned incessantly from side to side, and while Caradoc was poring over his dictionary and questioning her simultaneously, her rosy lips began to purse up as if indicative of a cry.

At this juncture Mrs. Pennant brought in Miss Morris. That amiable abigail had come with royal authority to take Daisy to the Castle to see Lady Mona.

"Dear me, Mrs. Pennant, your sons are monstrous clever!" she remarked, on perceiving the one boy at his books, and the other at his harp. "Too clever by half for farm-work, I should say."

Mrs. Pennant, who was proud of them, smiled acquiescently, not detecting her visitor's irony. Caradoc rose and put Daisy from his knee, while Michael ceased his musical attempts.

"I am only trying to learn English, ma'am," said Caradoc. "How glad you must be to be able to speak it so well!"

Morris was flattered. Her English was her one accomplishment.

"I have always lived with the quality," she returned. "My lady has sent me to fetch the little girl because I have English;" then, stooping over Daisy, she added, "You must come with me now, child."

Daisy looked at her wistfully; then put her arms round Caradoc, saying,—

"Daisy not do away."

"She must come, Mrs. Pennant. My lady's orders are not to be disobeyed," said Morris, drawing herself up.

"Certainly, Miss Morris. I should desire to do what her ladyship wishes. Carad, you had better take her as far as you can," replied Mrs. Pennant. "I will put on her best things. Come with mother, little Daisy."

The child had already learnt from the boys to call the good woman by that tender word, and understood enough to leave the room with her.

"If you would be so good as to tell her in English that we are going for a walk to see the great house, I think she would come," said Caradoc to Morris.

"*We*, Caradoc! I did not bring an invitation for you," she remarked, superciliously.

The boy's face flushed as he replied, proudly,—

"I did not think of going beyond the great gates, though my Lord Penruddock has asked me more than once."

When Daisy returned she came dancing in, attired in the best blue frock, clean white trousers, a white tippet, and white quilted jean sun-bonnet. Her doll, from which she would not be separated, was in her arms; and, to Marget's supreme delight and astonishment, she had arranged it Welsh fashion—

twisting an old plaid scarf cross-wise round it and her own tiny person.

"There's clever she is!" Marget had said, with uplifted eyes. "She has only seen Matty and her baby twice, and she carries her doll just the same."

"It is Phœbe her own self!" exclaimed Michael, as she entered, followed by his mother.

Daisy made no difficulty in accompanying Morris when led by Caradoc. The road, as Farmer Pennant said, was detestable, and at times overflowed by the riotous brook that ran alongside of it; but Caradoc took the child in his arms when they reached the stoniest part, and also carried her across the narrow bridge which spanned the brook. Morris picked her way daintily, wondering why Mr. Pennant did not keep his roads in better order.

"That is the Earl's work," said Caradoc.

They finally reached the road which led directly to the Castle. This ran along the middle of the promontory, and was bordered by such hardy trees as would bear the exposed position. The ground was irregular, and, owing to its rocky base, unproductive; still it was green, and dotted at that season with bluebells and primroses. Midway the promontory another road branched off from the main drive, which led to the part of the Castle occupied by the servants. Morris took this way, so that if Caradoc had desired to go as far as the great gate, once a portcullis, he would have been disappointed. The principal drive was badly kept enough, but the side road was worse, being rutty, grass-grown, and stony. Daisy, however, ran along the sward on either side of it, gathering flowers at every step.

She was suddenly arrested by an imperative "Who are you?—what are you about?" which sent her to Caradoc.

"It is only the little girl from Brynhafod, my lord. Lady Mona has sent for her," said Morris.

The questioner was Lord Penruddock, who followed Daisy. Caradoc had been for the moment hidden by the rising ground,

and when his lordship met him face to face, he flushed to the temples. Caradoc's colour also came as he raised his cap. Both were sore about the encounter on the cliff, and they had not met since. Lord Penruddock turned to Daisy without speaking to Caradoc.

"Were you the child washed up by the sea?" he asked, touching the scarf that enfolded her doll.

She glanced shyly at him from beneath the sun-bonnet; then, clinging to Caradoc, said,—

"Naughty boy sall not have my dolly."

"I will if I like, and you also; waifs belong to the Earl," he cried. "But we don't want you. Take her to Lady Mona, Morris; Pennant shall come with me."

Morris would have obeyed, but the child clung to Caradoc.

"May I take her to the door, my lord?" he asked.

Lord Penruddock did not condescend to answer; so Morris beckoned him on, and they soon reached the postern leading to the servants' offices.

Meanwhile his young lordship dawdled on behind. He was in no amiable mood, for he felt that his will had been resisted successfully by an inferior, and he had been pondering the possibility of still subduing Caradoc.

The huge dark towers of the Castle frowned above the battlemented wall in which was the side entrance to the court, surrounded by buildings, whither Morris was bound. This was the inhabited side of the Castle, which stood, as has been said, a hundred feet above the sea, over rocks and caves. Ton Bay lay beneath, and ocean all around. When the heavy, nailed, arched door slowly opened, Morris said to Daisy, who was still holding Caradoc's hand,—

"Now come and see Puff."

The word was magical.

"Where Puff?" she asked. "Tome, Tarad."

"He shall come and fetch you," returned Morris, grimly; and, catching the child up, she swung back the door and hurried across the court, leaving the two boys without.

Daisy began to cry; but Morris proceeded towards a round tower, through a curious doorway, across a large hall, up a spiral staircase, and finally along a corridor which looked upon the sea, to what was called the Lady Mona's apartments. These were in another tower, adjoining the Countess's private rooms, and apart from the Earl's.

Daisy found herself at last in a moderate-sized and somewhat shabbily furnished sitting-room, or schoolroom, as it was usually called. Everything in it was old, even to the lesson-books used by Lady Mona; for the Earl was slow to renew, excusing himself upon two pleas—that of the poverty of his Earldom, and his dislike to breaking up old associations, or, rather, modernising the antique. In this room sat Lady Mona, and her governess, Miss Manent, both expecting Daisy with some impatience; for the excitement of a visit of any kind was better than none, and their lives were extremely dull.

"There is Puff," said Morris, as she put down the frightened child near the French poodle, asleep on Lady Mona's lap. "She is a peevish, disagreeable thing, your ladyship," she added, as Lady Mona began to talk to Daisy.

"Puff! Puff!" said Daisy, drying her eyes, and stroking the silky-white fur of the ill-tempered poodle.

Miss Manent rose from the high, straight, carved chair on which she sat, and knelt down by Daisy.

"You darling!" she exclaimed, putting her arms round her and kissing her.

"How can you kiss her? She comes from a farm," said Lady Mona, who was not quite sure whether, after all, it had been wise to send for her.

Miss Manent had come to the Castle when she was seventeen, and Lady Mona six, as a sort of nursery governess, and had so far improved herself during four long, solitary years, that she maintained her position, and seemed likely to continue to hold it. The truth was that she had never dared to ask for an increase of salary, and the *poor* Earl knew that a fresh governess would demand higher terms; so when the Countess

suggested that Lady Mona required more accomplishments, he said he disliked change, and begged that Miss Manent might remain for the present, for she really did very well. And Miss Manent, being an orphan, and well-nigh friendless, remained. She was quiet, unassuming, and ladylike. Although not pretty, her face was interesting from its pensive expression and exceeding paleness. Not even Lady Mona could tell what were her temper and character; for she maintained, not only a rigid reserve, but a self-control so perfect that her ladyship's provoking and imperious manners failed, apparently, to irritate her. She had taken to music and reading more in self-defence against her lonely life than because she was particularly talented; and finding amongst the worm-eaten books of the old library many volumes of poems, she had ventured to ask permission to read them, and received consent. She did her duty by the Lady Mona according to her lights, and they were not brilliant, but the pupil had, as a rule, more control over the mistress than the mistress over the pupil. Hers was truly a solitary, if not a miserable, existence, and it is no wonder, therefore, that she threw her arms round Daisy instinctively, and exclaimed, "You darling!" Daisy, in return, put her disengaged arm round her neck, and her cherry lips to hers. The child-kiss was new to her, and her heart throbbed with a strange emotion. She had never, during their intercourse, ventured to kiss Lady Mona—who was, by nature, indifferent to that mode of displaying tenderness.

"Come with me and Morris, Daisy, and let us take off your bonnet," said Lady Mona.

"And Puff?" asked the child.

"Yes: but her name is Blanche," replied Lady Mona.

Daisy looked at Miss Manent, and by childish word and gesture asked her to accompany them; but Lady Mona negatived this at once. Daisy went reluctantly into the next room, which was Lady Mona's boudoir. Here she was instantly well amused, for it was filled with ornaments, dolls, and playthings. The furniture was old and shabby; but as Lady Mona had,

during her brief life, received and kept everything she could get, and never made a present in return, she had a goodly show of gifts. A wonderful house full of dolls, induced Daisy to unfold her sea-worn infant, and display her charms, after which Morris easily removed the bonnet and tippet.

"What is this?" asked Lady Mona, whose curiosity was insatiable, and who espied the gold chain, and immediately drew the locket, suspended by it, from beneath the frock, where it was partially hidden.

"Papa—Mamma," lisped Daisy, pointing to the locks of hair.

"I never saw anything so beautiful, Morris," remarked Lady Mona, examining it. "I have nothing like it. Pearls and diamonds, and the richest gold. I think it is meant for a wreath of daisies."

"Not open," said the child, as the young lady tried to unclose it.

"What a handsome clasp!" remarked Morris, peering into the fastening at the back, and fingering it inquisitively.

"It is handsome. I wish the Earl would give me such a one," said Lady Mona.

"Daisy mustn't dive it," lisped the child.

When they had sufficiently examined the locket, Morris took her departure, and Lady Mona displayed her possessions to Daisy. Then the Countess appeared in the schoolroom, and called them in.

"You must not keep her long, Mona. The Earl will be back to dinner, and may be early, as he expects some gentlemen. I wish, when he asks people, he would tell one sooner. My pink satin is not ready, and nothing becomes me so well."

Then her ladyship began to question Daisy; but all her inquiries resulted in a vague account of soldiers and palanquins, and elephants. It was evident that Daisy remembered nothing of the wreck, and the Countess was of opinion that she must have been washed from her hammock into the sea. She still believed that her mother and Ayah had gone away in

the big ship; and the pretty lips pursed up at the recollection, at which Miss Manent, quite impulsively for her, took her on her lap.

"Pray don't let her cry, Miss Manent," said the Countess. "Mona, you had better be dressed, in case the Earl should desire you to come down. Morris must not go away. I wish you had not sent for the child to-day. How perplexing things are! Perhaps, Miss Manent, you would kindly take her back to the farm."

"With pleasure, my lady," replied Miss Manent.

"But the Earl must not see her. Mona, ring for cake, and let her go at once. Now don't pout; she shall come again whenever you like; and you know you must be dressed. I think your blue silk is most becoming."

The Countess was an artist in dress. Daisy listened intently to this conversation, while Miss Manent, half unconsciously, examined the locket so much admired by Lady Mona and Morris.

When Daisy was satiated with cake, Morris was called to dress her, and Lady Mona accompanied them to her boudoir.

"I wish Mona had not taken this fancy for the child," said the Countess, when they were gone. "But you will understand, Miss Manent, that Lord Craigavon is to know nothing about it. Perhaps you had better get ready."

In less than a quarter of an hour, the governess and Daisy were outside the frowning walls of the Castle; the one breathing freely, the other chattering glibly. They were met at the door of Brynhafod by Mrs. Pennant, who was anxiously expecting both Daisy and Caradoc.

"Mam!" cried the child; and, forgetful even of her doll, sprang into the good woman's arms.

Miss Manent, who had never been at the farm before, could not resist her signal to enter and rest a few minutes in the cheerful parlour. Cake and mead—or *metheglyn*, as Mrs. Pennant called it—were instantly on the table, and Miss Manent's pale, passive face flushed into life at the

unexpected hospitality. She little knew that she—inmate of Craigavon Castle—was an object of pity at the farm. She dared not stay long, but making a desperate attempt at a Welsh phrase, drank the mead, kissed Daisy devoutly, shook hands with Mrs. Pennant, and left light for darkness. But the glimpse of sunshine made her, ever after, ready to fetch the child from Brynhafod, or take her back again.

When Mrs. Pennant was putting Daisy to bed, and trying to understand her account of her visit, she suddenly exclaimed in Welsh, "The locket! Where is the locket?"

Chain and locket had disappeared. There was at once a great commotion in the household, for everyone knew how valuable the ornament was in itself, and would be in case of a possible discovery of the child's friends. Daisy tried to explain that Morris and Lady Mona had examined it, but no one understood her. Mrs. Pennant and Marget had both sought to find the secret of the clasp that fastened the chain, and failed, so that it had not been off the little girl's neck while at the farm.

Michael and little Ben were sent to search for it; and there was a general outcry for Caradoc, who, contrary to his custom, had not come in to early supper.

"When he comes we will send him to the Castle," said Farmer Pennant. "We must put a stop to his wanderings after what he calls his antediluvian fooleries. The stones named in the Bible are old enough, but Ap Adam would try to make one believe in older still."

"How wicked! You must take the boys away from him!" exclaimed Mrs. Pennant, wandering out into the sunset to look for Caradoc, while the others sought the locket and chain.

CHAPTER VIII.

TUTOR AND GOVERNESS.

SOON after Miss Manent left Brynhafod, she was met by Mr. Tudor. That gentleman was in search of Lord Penruddock. He paused to speak to Miss Manent, who was almost a stranger to him, although they lived in the same Castle. His and Lord Penruddock's apartments were in a different part of the huge, gloomy pile from Lady Mona's; so the governess and he dwelt apart. He was in the habit of joining the Earl and Countess and their guests at will; but Miss Manent never appeared in the family-circle—if so disunited a party could be called a circle.

Mr. Tudor was the son of a late steward of Lord Craigavon's; therefore, like every one else, under his lordship's power and patronage. His father died soon after he had taken orders, and the Earl appointed him his chaplain and his son's tutor, promising him the living of Craigavon when vacant. His lordship also proposed to hold the stewardship in abeyance for his younger brother, provided he and his mother would undertake it meanwhile. This offer was too good to be refused, so, when the living fell in, Mr. Tudor found himself vicar, chaplain, tutor, and virtually steward. He also still found himself at the Castle, the Earl promising to restore the Vicarage when Lord Penruddock went to school or college.

Mr. Tudor had had his aspirations, and they certainly had not tended towards the posts he now filled; but he was, like many others, obliged to circumscribe them when it became a

question of daily bread. He was anxious to do his duty by his pupil and in his parish, but even here his desires were curbed by a power that proved stronger than he: for the Earl would not allow his son to be controlled, and himself controlled the Vicar's parishioners. This cast a restraint over a naturally buoyant temperament, and interfered sadly with an upright man's desire to do what was his decided duty.

"I do not think I ever met you alone before, Miss Manent," he said, after he had inquired if she had seen Lord Penruddock.

She coloured slightly, but made no reply. She was afraid to tell him of the visit of Daisy to the Castle.

"My mother has often expressed a desire to know you," he continued, kindly. "Should you ever have the opportunity, I wish you would go and see her."

"I wish I could; but perhaps the Countess would not like it," returned Miss Manent, surprised into speech by so unexpected a proposal.

"It does not do to be too submissive," he remarked, smiling as he remembered how difficult he found it to break the chain himself. "The Countess and Lady Mona are often absent, and then you might surely go out occasionally."

"I think I should be afraid," said the nervous girl.

"I cannot imagine where Penruddock is," said Mr. Tudor, abruptly, surprised at the grateful glance he received from eyes whose dark depths had seemed to him unfathomable. "He takes advantage of the Earl's absence to escape from me. Not long ago I found him with the young Pennants on the cliffs, and he has been trying to elude me ever since. Have you remarked that he is unusually moody and irritable of late, Miss Manent?"

"I seldom speak to him," she replied.

"I only wish I dared to use the birch: reasoning is thrown away," he said, becoming suddenly confidential. "He will be ruined; and yet he is not without good qualities. It would be a grand work, Miss Manent, to bring up those children to good and useful purpose. When

I think that Penruddock will be the next Earl, and will have almost kingly power over these lands and people, it humbles me to consider how little I can do!"

Miss Manent had never viewed the matter in this light. She had only striven to get through her days without a battle, and had gone to rest contented when she had succeeded. She sighed as she said,—

"Nothing will improve Lady Mona: she is always the same;" then checking herself in terror at having said so much, she added, "I mean, I have not sufficient authority —or—I—am afraid."

Mr. Tudor looked at her with pity. He had never seen any one so nervous and so terrified.

"Have you no one?" he began, and hesitated.

"Only the Countess and Lady Mona," she replied, her eyes on the ground—her voice trembling.

"Poor girl!" he exclaimed, holding out his hand, into which she put hers timidly, glancing round lest any one should see the act. "At any rate, consider me both as your pastor and friend."

They shook hands and went their ways—he to consider how much more desolate her lot was than his, she to reflect on the possibility of doing more than she had hitherto done to make of her pupil the "good and useful woman" Mr. Tudor had suggested.

That gentleman roamed about for some time in a fruitless search for Lord Penruddock. At last he reached Monad—a part of his parish that he dreaded. Neither preaching nor teaching had any effect on its wretched inhabitants, and he believed that nothing but stringent measures on the part of the Earl would put a stop to their horrible practice of wrecking, credited by the scattered inhabitants of Craigavon, yet never proved.

"Have you seen Lord Penruddock?" he called out to a woman who was standing at the door of the beer-shop.

"He was here just now, with Cradoc Pennant, Brynha-

fod. I saw them go round the point. Be you sure, sir, that Cradoc will lead my lord into mischief."

"If we were all as likely to do what is right as the family of Brynhafod, we should be better than we are," replied the parson, with more zeal than prudence. "Why don't you come to church, Nan?"

"Lord bless you, we've none of us clothes fit to sit with the gentry. We are going to chapel sometimes."

"You are nearer the church; and God looks at the heart, not the garments. Pray to Him to cleanse the heart, and you will forget your clothes—indeed, He will provide better for you," said Mr. Tudor, sharply.

"Prove that, and I'll pray directly," replied Nan, impudently.

A ragged crowd gathered round her as she spoke, and Mr. Tudor felt that he ought not to let the opportunity of addressing this portion of his flock slip by. He spoke to them earnestly of their duty to God and man, but was interrupted in his discourse by the surly voice of Davy Jones from behind.

"Let God and the Earl do their duty to us first," were his words.

"We stand or fall according to our own acts and deeds," said Mr. Tudor, turning on the man, whom everybody feared.

"Then look to your own, master," was the sullen reply. "We don't want no parsons nor preaching here. When you can build us fresh houses, you may come again. I saw the young Earl and Pennant's son up the cliffs just now."

Mr. Tudor, feeling he had delayed too long, hurried round the point.

"If he is with Caradoc Pennant, he is at least safe," he muttered. "But am I safe? Am I justified in undertaking to see after him from morning to night, whilst these godless souls are committed to my keeping?"

Pondering this all-important point, he hastened up the Aber defile. He was met midway by Ap Adam, whom he asked if he had seen Lord Penruddock.

"I met him just now hurrying homeward over the cliffs," was the reply.

"And Caradoc Pennant?"

"No: he was not with him."

Mr. Tudor took the way across the cliffs to the Castle, and arrived too late for dinner. Lord Penruddock was home before him, and in time. He always dined with his parents, and was, therefore, with them.

A servant came to say that Mr. David Pennant insisted on seeing Mr. Tudor immediately.

"He asked first for Mrs. Morris," said the man, "and she went to him. Then he inquired for Lord Penruddock, or you, sir. He seemed much excited, so I thought it best to come to you."

"Right, Williams. Should the Earl inquire for me, say I have been delayed. Where is Mr. Pennant?"

"In the housekeeper's room, sir."

"Show him into mine, if you please."

Mr. Tudor went down to an apartment on the basement, fitted up as a kind of grim study. .It was large, dark, and tapestried; and the two wax candles which had been lighted for Mr. Pennant, scarcely rendered him visible.

"Excuse my disturbing you, Mr. Tudor," began the farmer at once, "my boy, Carad, accompanied the little foundling and Miss Morris as far as the servants' entrance this afternoon. Miss Morris says she took the child to Lady Mona, and left Carad outside with Lord Penruddock. The child lost a valuable chain and locket either in this Castle or on the way to it, of which Miss Morris says she knows nothing. But this does not bring me here. Carad has not returned home; and as he is a punctual, obedient lad, his mother is making herself ill about him. She expected him back as soon as he had dropped the child here."

"I will inquire of Lord Penruddock when he leaves the dining-room. He cannot be long. Davy Jones, the fisherman of Monad, told me he saw Caradoc on the cliffs with

Lord Penruddock. He is probably at home by this time, and you have missed him."

"If he has gone to the eagle's cliff!" ejaculated Mr. Pennant, with clenched teeth, "But he never disobeyed me in his life, bold and wild as he is!"

While the farmer and tutor awaited Lord Penruddock, we must return to the time when the two boys were left together without the postern gate.

CHAPTER IX.

ARAN TOWER.

"SHOW me the fossils in the limestone rock at Carreg Mawr," said the imperious Penruddock to Caradoc, when the postern closed upon them.

Caradoc reflected a moment. His father had never forbidden him to do this, and it was safe. He did not like the expression of his companion's face, still he replied, unhesitatingly,

"Very well, my lord."

Much to Caradoc's satisfaction, Lord Penruddock took him down to Ton Bay by the private path, which he had never before trodden. Neither of them spoke a word. They struggled over the rough beach, until they reached a particular spot, known to Caradoc as backed by rocks containing fossils. He took a small hammer from his pocket, and began to chip the lias.

"This is the best place, my lord," he said. "But we must climb for the fossils. Mr. Ap Adam says this is carboniferous limestone folded in lias."

"He is a stupid ass!" was Lord Penruddock's gracious reply.

However, he condescended to climb the rock, and watch Caradoc, until he produced a broken fossil or two.

"A piece of an old snail-shell! A stone caterpillar!" he cried, contemptuously. "Is that all? But I have made you get them. Now I will give you this guinea to show me the eagle's nest."

He drew out the gold coin then in general circulation, value twenty-one shillings, and laid it on a piece of rock.

"Now, I will give you this guinea to show me the eagle's nest."
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"Do you think, my lord, I would do for gold what I would not do because my father forbade me?" asked Caradoc, indignantly. "We are not to be bought and sold like the peasantry."

"The Earl is your master as well as theirs. I shall be your master some day," replied Lord Penruddock," fiercely.

"Then I hope you will do your duty by your servants," said Caradoc, forgetting, for a moment, his habitual respect; but adding, half reverently, half satirically, "One is our Master; even Christ."

"What canting hypocrites you Pennants are! What did you mean by saying your prayers on the cliff the other day?" asked the young lord.

"I meant to give thanks to God for saving your lordship's and Michael's life," answered Caradoc, gravely.

Lord Penruddock turned aside, and was silent a moment.

"Come with me to Aran Tower. It is higher than the eagle's cliff!" he then exclaimed, imperiously.

Caradoc smiled; for he had penetration enough to perceive that the boy was resolved to conquer somehow. He had never been forbidden to mount the height on which the tower stood—though the spot had a bad name—so he immediately acquiesced in the request. He had, besides, a great desire to see the interior of the tower, and thought it possible Lord Penruddock might penetrate it.

"You have left the guinea, my lord," he said, as they scrambled down the rock.

"What is that to you? Take it, and do what I ask," returned Penruddock.

Caradoc saw that the evil spirit was in the lad, so he led the way in silence, and the gold was left on the ledge of the rock. He wondered whether some future antiquarian, centuries hence, would find it and speculate upon it.

They were more than half an hour reaching the tower, for the beach was rough and the ascent difficult. Lord Penruddock did not vouchsafe a word during their progress; but

his face worked strangely. It was an expressive countenance, and capable, at times, of inspiring love and admiration: but Caradoc had defied him, as he thought, and he was bent on vengeance.

Aran Tower had been built, by the present Earl, on the highest available point of land commanding the sea; but no one, save the Earl and the people who kept the tower, ever entered it, and none knew its secrets. All that was ascertained was that it enabled its inmates to give his lordship information concerning wrecks. How none could tell.

"What a prospect it is!" exclaimed Caradoc involuntarily, when he and his moody companion stood breathless on the height.

"We will go in," said Lord Penruddock, hammering at the huge knocker of the massive door, and shouting, "Open the door, Evan! Evan the Tower!"

A face peeped through the loophole at the side, and soon after the door was opened.

"Bless me! is it you, my lord?—and Master Pennant?" said a voice that no effort at civility could render other than sharp, harsh, and querulous.

The speaker was a tall, loose-limbed, ungainly man, with a wary, cunning face. He had been the Earl's gamekeeper, but was maimed in one arm, and blinded in one eye, in an affray with poachers; so he was pensioned in a way peculiar to the Earl—who generally managed to make his pensioners pay. He had the onerous duty of looking after the tower and reporting the wrecks.

"Yes, it is I," said Lord Penruddock. "Let us in, Evan."

Evan glanced suspiciously at Caradoc.

"My wife is ill, my lord," he began, cautiously.

"We will prescribe for her," replied Lord Penruddock, who could make himself pleasant to his inferiors when it pleased him.

He slipped into the tower and beckoned Caradoc after him. Evan remonstrated in a whisper.

"The Earl will have no one come in here, my lord."

"Let him in, and I will explain," was the reply, also whispered.

Caradoc was admitted, and found himself in a darkish kitchen, in which was a woman languidly turning a spinning-wheel, two or three dogs, and a cat. The room contained a large cupboard-bedstead, several heavy chests, a corner-cupboard with the customary amount of crockery and glass, a settle, and some chairs and tables. Caradoc went straight to the woman and shook hands with her. She had once been a servant of his grandmother's, and the Pennants never neglected an old friend. She was even taller and more ungainly than her husband, with sharp, dark eyes, and a sharp, thin face. Her cap-strings were loose, and her iron-grey hair untidy; but she wore a red and yellow handkerchief pinned over her head, which helped to conceal such defects.

"When are you coming to Brynhafod, Betto? Mother was asking about you the other day," said Caradoc, cheerfully.

"I am too ill to stir—and 'tis good for the blind to see you here," replied Betto. "How is old master, and your blessed mother, and Marget? And what's the rights of the child you've got at the farm? And is Michael as sickly as he was?"

While Caradoc was answering these questions Lord Penruddock beckoned Evan out again.

"I'll give you a guinea, Evan, to keep Caradoc Pennant here for some hours," said his lordship. "Give him a fright. He is an insolent fool! The guinea is on the Carreg Mawr, where I left it just now. I'll make all right with the Earl; but you must go at once, or some one may steal the gold. Let's lock him in, then I shall have my revenge, and be master again."

He went into the little passage, drew the great key from the door, and returning, placed it in the keyhole outside. He was not strong enough to turn it.

"Lock it," he said, imperatively.

"Are you sure the guinea is on Carreg Mawr, my lord? It would be a pity to throw it away."

"Positive. Lock him in; it will be rare fun."

The key turned, and the boy's face broke into smiles.

Caradoc heard a grating noise, and looked up.

"What's Evan locking the door for, I wonder?" said Betto.

Caradoc went to see, and returned to her, laughing.

"Lord Penruddock is playing me a trick," he said. "I understand now why he has brought me here."

"'Tis a horrible place, my dear," said Betto, shuddering. "I see the fairies all in green, and worse, on my deed! You had better look out and call Evan."

Caradoc opened a well-barred casement, and shouted for Evan and Lord Penruddock; but no one answered. Then he tried the door to see if it was really locked, and found that this only place of ingress and egress was assuredly closed.

"I shall go upstairs, Betto!" shouted Caradoc.

"Don't, Cradoc, *bach!* Evan will kill me!" shouted back the woman; but the boy had mounted half a dozen steps of the circular staircase, and did not hear.

Betto was lamed by rheumatism, and could not follow.

"I will not be locked in for nothing," muttered Caradoc, as he ascended the hundreds of steps that wound round and round the tower, pausing here and there to glance through an occasional loophole. There were no windows, but he fancied there must be small rooms in the centre, as he perceived a door now and again, opposite these slits. He reached the top at last, and was surprised to find himself in a sort of observatory, glazed overhead, and with windows between the battlements.

"It is here my lord sits, then, when he is hidden for hours in the tower," he thought.

Two or three telescopes were so arranged as to enable an observer to scan the horizon and nearer points, and Caradoc lost no time in making use of them. He was a shrewd boy, and soon understood why they were so placed. There were

two vessels in the offing, and to his surprise he saw the sailors at work on them. Moving the telescope, he exclaimed aloud,—

"Why, that is a barrel—that a broken mast; and with the naked eye nothing is visible!"

He went from telescope to telescope, until he made it clear to himself that every dangerous point and the whole line of rough, broken coast, could be, so to say, brought so near as to apprise the Earl or his myrmidon of whatever happened on the sea.

"This is how they circumvent the wreckers, and know where their ill-gotten gains lie. I wish I could circumvent them. A light at the end of the Esgair would do it, by warning off the ships. Why doesn't the Earl put one? Not he. He likes the wreckage too well, the old miser! At least, my Lord Penruddock is open-handed. I could set a light there, for I've often climbed to the very end."

The Esgair was a rocky cape, stretching far into the sea, out of sight of either castle or village. It lay near the quicksands, so that a lighthouse, or other warning at its extremity, might, as it occurred to Caradoc by a sort of inspiration, warn off a doomed vessel.

The boy became so interested in exploring the wonders of ocean and sky that he forgot everything else. The words "Millstone Grit—Pudding-Stone—Farewell Rock," and the like, escaped him, as he surveyed the rock-bound coast; and when, suddenly, the moon and her attendant star appeared from behind one of these fortresses of nature, he turned the telescope upon her, and was lost in amazement. As the stars came out, one by one, he continued his investigations, and would probably have been at them until midnight, had he not been startled by a deep, severe voice, and turning, encountered —the Earl of Craigavon!

CHAPTER X.

THE BROKEN LEG.

WE must return for a few minutes to the Castle before we recount what passed between the Earl and Caradoc. When Lord Penruddock left the dining-room, a little before his father and his guests, he was met by Mr. Tudor, who requested him to accompany him to Mr. Pennant. The boy looked restive, but had no time to refuse.

"I am come to ask you where you left Caradoc, my lord?" said the farmer, in his straightforward, decided manner.

There was no reply.

"I must know, for he has not returned home since Mrs. Morris left him with your lordship. You are therefore in a way responsible for him," continued Mr. Pennant.

"I! He defies me, and knows how to take care of himself," said Lord Penruddock, avoiding the farmer's eye.

"That evasion will not do, my lord. Where did you leave my son? His mother, who is just recovering from a long illness, is very anxious about him, and so am I. I must know the exact truth."

"Then I left him in Aran Tower; and I am glad I punished you all for not letting him show me the eagle's nest," replied the young lord, with an assumption of superiority not quite natural.

"In Aran Tower! How did you get him there?" asked Mr. Tudor.

"Evan the Tower locked him in with old Betto while we went in search of a guinea I left on Carreg Mawr. I am glad

I frightened you, Farmer Pennant. You won't interfere with me again."

"The trick was unworthy of you, my lord," said the farmer, surprised and relieved. "What if anything has happened to Evan, and he has not returned?"

This had not occurred to Lord Penruddock, and he was alarmed at the notion.

"The Earl has another key," he replied, haughtily.

Mr. Tudor left the room, and waylaid the Earl as he was leaving the dining-room. He told him hastily the facts of the case.

"Locked in the tower! Caradoc Pennant! Evan absent! a guinea on Carreg Mawr!" exclaimed his lordship, startled out of his customary reserve. "A guinea! Where did Penruddock get a guinea?"

That magic word affected the nobleman as much as the keeper. Gold is the *open sesame* to many lips as well as hearts.

"I did not know he had one," replied Mr. Tudor.

"A guinea! Do people sow guineas? Be so good as to make my excuses to my friends; say sudden business has occurred. Send Pennant home, and say I am going myself to the tower. Order some of my people to go round by Carreg Mawr in search of Evan."

"I am afraid the tide is in, my lord."

"Never mind the tide. A guinea!"

And this guinea—not Caradoc Pennant or Evan the Tower—led Lord Craigavon to take a moonlit ride up a rough mountain road to Aran Tower.

When he unlocked the heavy door he was startled by a shriek from Betto.

"Evan! Evan! I thought you were dead! Cradoc has gone upstairs, and never come down again!" she cried.

"It is not Evan," said Lord Craigavon. "Lend me your candle."

He took a rushlight from the table, on which Betto had outspread her Bible. She had been seeking relief from terror

in that sacred volume. She had not only a profound reverence for its contents—acquired during her life at Brynhafod,—but a superstitious belief that harm would not reach her while the Book was near.

"Oh! my lord Earl—bless me! your lordship. Evan went to the Castle with my young lord. I'm crippled from the rheumatiz, your lordship, and am falling when I try to move. That Cradoc Pennant's so bold he 'on't be listening to nobody, my lord."

But the Earl and rushlight had disappeared within the tower staircase, and re-appeared, as we have read, beneath the stars at the summit.

"What are you doing here?" he said harshly, as he saw Caradoc gazing at the heavens through his most powerful telescope. "Thief!—robber!" he added, when he perceived that the boy was so absorbed as to be unconscious of his presence.

It was at these words that Caradoc turned and faced the Earl of Craigavon.

"What are you doing here?—serf, villain, thief, scoundrel!" repeated his lordship, who stood, rushlight in hand, close to Caradoc.

"I am waiting to be let out, my lord," replied the lad.

"What brought you here?"

"Lord Penruddock."

"Were you with him at Carreg Mawr?"

"Yes, my lord."

"Had he a guinea, boy—a guinea? What did he do with it?"

"He left it on the big stone, my lord."

"Where is Evan?"

"I have neither seen him nor Lord Penruddock since they locked me up here."

"What business had you with my son?"

"He bade me show him the fossils in the lias, and I obeyed, my lord; then he brought me on here."

Lord Craigavon glanced for a moment at the fearless boy. He knew that he was telling the truth. The face of the moon, that looked down on the half-glazed, battlemented tower, was not more clear.

"How dared you come up here?"

"I was curious to see the top of the tower, my lord."

"What right had you to stay and pry into my affairs? I will have you committed as a thief."

"I have stolen nothing, my lord. I looked through the glasses at the rocks and the sea; and then I looked to see how shipwrecks might be avoided; and then——"

"What!" interrupted the Earl, in a voice that startled Caradoc.

"I forgot everything else, my lord—even the anxiety of my parents—in the moon and stars. How wonderful they are! How great are the works of God!"

The boy had indeed been carried beyond this world and himself, in wonder and in awe at the revelations of the telescope. Lord Craigavon's anger was arrested for a moment by the reverence of his manner; then he resumed:

"I beg you will mention to no one this boyish trick of my son, neither that you have been in this place."

"I have no secrets from my parents, my lord."

"Your father knows already. I request that the matter go no further."

"Very well, my lord."

The Earl pointed to the stairs, and Caradoc passed him and began the descent. But for the moonbeams, that penetrated at intervals the loopholes, he would have been in total darkness. The Earl, by the light of his rushlight, closed and locked a door, that had been by chance open, leading to his observatory, and followed. When Caradoc reached the bottom with some difficulty, he heard voices in the kitchen, and went thither. So did the Earl, when he had locked another door at the end of the staircase. Evan would have been dismissed summarily for neglect of duty, but for the scene that awaited them.

Evan was lying on the bed, nearly insensible; Betto was swaying herself to and fro in her chair, and sobbing violently; while Farmer Pennant and Mr. Ap Adam were binding up Evan's leg, which seemed to be broken.

It will be remembered that Mr. Tudor met Ap Adam in the Aber Ravine. The latter gentleman was going on a private geological survey of the cliffs about Carreg Mawr, and when he reached the big stone on which the guinea had been left, he found Evan lying beneath it. That worthy had managed to climb the rocks and secure the guinea; but in grasping the gold with his only useful arm he had slipped, and either broken or disabled his leg. He could not move, and was in awful terror; for the tide, though still far out, was coming in fast, and, but for Ap Adam's arrival, he must have been drowned. Evan was a tall, bony man, Mr. Ap Adam slight, and not particularly muscular. More help was needed to move him, and none was at hand.

"For heaven's sake don't leave me, sir! I'll try to walk!" cried Evan.

Ap Adam helped him to rise; but walking was out of the question; his agony was intolerable.

"Try to drag yourself to the Aber, where you will be, at least, safe from the tide," said Ap Adam, taking hold of his arm to aid him.

Fear paralyzes pain, and dread ot drowning overmastered Evan's. The yawning, though happily at that time, quiet sea, was longing to engulf him, stayed only by His hand who ruled it.

"Don't leave me, sir! For the Lord's sake, don't leave me! I'm not ready to die!" cried Evan.

"Not as long as there is a chance of saving you," replied Ap Adam. "The wreckers give the waves tithes enough in human flesh without making your poor body a tenth."

"Lord have mercy upon me!" shrieked Evan.

Ap Adam scarcely believed it possible to reach the pass in time, and looked about for some other means of escape—but there was none! As the distant sea grew nearer, he asked

himself if he could leave this fellow-creature to perish, even to save his own life? But of what use to sacrifice both? He prayed earnestly for help, and laboured on. But he never forgot the supreme moment. They were within sight of the defile, when Evan's strength failed, and he nearly fainted. The spray of the waves had already touched his face. Must he leave this man to secure his own life?

"Give me strength, O God!" he exclaimed, and clasped his arms round Evan's waist as he lay on the beach.

Dragging him over the rough stones, while the sea almost touched them, he reached the point where the river-brook flowed into it. But how get to the path at its side? He shouted for help, and was answered. His prayer and the ejaculations of poor Betto over her Bible were heard. Gwylfa appeared. He growled as he seized Evan's coat, for he knew the man and hated him; but the dog is too noble an animal to let his enemy perish, so he helped Ap Adam to drag him ashore, then left him to rejoin Mr. Pennant, who was descending the cliff to the pass.

The moon had risen—the "young May moon"—and, trusting to her light and Gwylfa's sagacity, the farmer had ventured across the cliffs by the short but dangerous path that led from the Castle to the Aber, and thence across the stream to the Tower. While the Earl was taking the longer round on horseback, the farmer had started on foot, and, but for stumbling upon Ap Adam and Evan, would have reached the tower before his lordship.

"What's this? Another waif?" he exclaimed.

"It is Evan the Tower," replied Ap Adam. "I don't think he's dead, because 'those who are born to be hanged will never be drowned'; but I believe he has broken his leg. You must help me to carry him across the stream and up the Aran."

"It will be doing good for evil, then. The fellow has locked Carad into the tower," said Mr. Pennant. "Take the rogue by the feet, and I'll lay hold of his body."

To Mr. Pennant, who could lift a sack of wheat, Evan was

comparatively light weight, so they managed to get him to the tower in about half an hour, by which period the Earl had arrived, and joined Caradoc. But the great door was locked.

"Here is the key," said Ap Adam, drawing it from Evan's pocket.

Fortunately the Earl had withdrawn his key from the lock, so they opened the door.

"Don't be frightened, Betto. Evan has had a cold bath," said Mr. Pennant, kindly, as they carried her husband to the bed.

Poor Betto shrieked with terror.

"I am somewhat of a doctor, and have often set broken bones," remarked Ap Adam, coolly unfastening the keeper's knee-breeches and drawing down his stockings.

It was at this juncture that Caradoc entered the kitchen, and was greeted by Gwylfa with those demonstrations of joy that dogs alone display to ungrateful man.

"Why is the door open?" asked the moody Earl; while Caradoc ran to his father, and said—

"It was not my fault. I hope mother is not frightened. What has happened to Evan? Here is the Earl. Don't cry, Betto."

Lord Craigavon went to the bed instinctively, and, seeing Evan's state, asked "what the careless fool had been doing now?" He was told. He again left the kitchen, closing the door behind him, and a grating of keys was heard. He returned with a bottle in his hand containing spirits. They administered some, and Evan revived. Meanwhile, Ap Adam quietly bandaged the leg, taking no notice of the Earl, who turned to Pennant with—"You had better take your boy home, and on your way tell Lewis, the keeper, and his wife to come here. I shall stay till they arrive. Go, young sir, and keep out of Lord Penruddock's way for the future," he continued, facing Caradoc, but not meeting his eye.

Ap Adam remained, and Mr. Pennant and Caradoc departed. They took the mountain-road homewards, and soon reached

one of the lodges, occupied by the keeper mentioned by the Earl. They sent him and his wife to the tower, as requested, then made all haste to reach the farm. A messenger, sent by the farmer from the Castle, had already apprised the inmates of Caradoc's safety, who was welcomed by them, as may be imagined, with tears of joy.

"Now let us praise the Lord for the mercies that He showeth to us children of men," said Old Farmer Pennant; and the whole family knelt in prayer. "Thou trustest too much in thine own strength, my son," he said to Caradoc, when they rose. "Put thy trust in the Lord, and be doing good, and verily thou shalt be fed."

"I will try, grandfather," replied the boy, meekly.

"Say rather that thou wilt pray, my lad," returned the old man, laying his hand on Caradoc's head.

"May I go with you and see Daisy, mother?" whispered Caradoc, and followed Mrs. Pennant to the foundling's crib, now placed by her bedside.

Here he kissed the sleeping child, and heard of the loss of the diamond locket.

CHAPTER XI.

AP ADAM'S SIXTH BOY.

WHEN Mr. Pennant and Caradoc had left the tower, the Earl stooped over Evan and whispered—not so low, however, but that Ap Adam's sharp ears caught the words—

"Did you find the guinea?"

"N—o; y—e—s; n—o, my lord," replied Evan.

"You—did! It—is—mine! Give—it—to—me!" breathed the Earl, sternly, emphasising every word.

Evan tried to put his hand in his pocket, and failed. The Earl inserted his successfully, and secured the coveted coin.

"I will not answer for the consequences if you excite the man, my lord," broke out Ap Adam, resolutely.

"Who are you?" asked the Earl, turning suddenly, and meeting the supposed doctor's spectacles. "I thought you were Dr. James."

In his anxiety about the gold, the Earl had only taken in the fact that some one was, as he imagined, setting Evan's broken leg; and he took it for granted that it was the parish doctor, who was old and deaf. He had not paused to consider that it would have been impossible to summon him in so short a time; and had thus over-reached himself.

"I am *a* parish doctor, but not *the* one, *par excellence*," replied Ap Adam, satirically.

"Then we have no further need of you, sir," replied the Earl. "We are obliged for your aid, but will send for Dr. James at once."

"He had better not meddle with the bandages; nothing but

a splint is needed. Keep up your spirits, man, and you will do," said Ap Adam.

"For the Lord's sake don't leave him, sir!" shrieked Betto, throwing up the apron with which she had covered her face, and nearly knocking down her spinning-wheel.

Evan also looked at him appealingly; the very dogs whined.

"The Lord of Craigavon is omnipotent here," replied Ap Adam, bowing to the Earl, and leaving the room.

But the great door was locked; and his lordship was obliged to turn porter.

"Thank you. Good-night, my lord," said Ap Adam, laughing to himself in the moonlight.

"Good-night. Curse the impudent fellow!" retorted the Earl, glancing after him as he hurried down the rocks to the gorge.

He soon met Lewis and his wife, and begged them to assure Dr. James that the bone was properly set; then he walked slowly towards the vicarage, his temporary home.

"The thirst for gold is as absorbing as the thrist for alcohol, and leads to crimes as great," he muttered, as he seated himself at a table, on which was spread a repast of bread and cheese, salad, and cold water. "Better poverty than sin."

"A middle-aged woman, with a cheery round red face, came into the room. It was the wife of the parish clerk, who was engaged by Ap Adam to do for him such cooking and cleaning as he could not manage himself. She lived near the church, and was able to come to and fro at pleasure."

"Can I do anything more for you, sir?" she asked.

"You have already exceeded our agreement," he replied, glancing at the table, which he usually laid himself. "But exceed it still further by finding out for me to-morrow, from Dr. James, or Lewis, the keeper, or Mrs. Lewis, how Evan the Tower gets on. He has broken his leg."

Ap Adam knew that, if any one would discover a secret, it was Mrs. Madoc, the clerk, his valuable and voluble aid. She had tried hard for the best part of four years to discover his, and had frequently nearly got the better of his strategy by all

sorts of ambushes. If he had a secret, however, he believed it as yet in his own keeping.

"I'm sure I shall be very happy, sir; but that Lewis is as close as an oyster, and my lord keeps Evan closer still, if possible, as it isn't his nature to be so secret. But Lisbeth, the keeper, is open-mouthed enough."

"I dare say she will tell you. Good night, Mrs. Madoc."

The following morning, after a breakfast as frugal as his supper, which he prepared himself, Ap Adam went to his school-room. He was surprised to see a little girl seated between Caradoc and Michael, who had arrived before the other boys.

"It is Daisy, sir, the little foundling. She asked to come with us, and mother let her," said Michael, not usually the first to speak; but Caradoc was engaged with the child.

Ap Adam spoke to her in English. He asked her if she was come to school, and, from her serious, composed manner, saw at once that she knew what school meant. The child was naturally self-possessed, and said, in answer to a question put by Ap Adam,—

"Daisy tan read and pell."

A mist came over the schoolmaster's spectacles as he gazed at the little waif, and he suddenly left the room. He returned, however, immediately, with a child's first primer in his hand. He went behind Daisy, and, kneeling down, inserted his head between her and Caradoc, and laid the book before her. He told her to read, and she began at once steadily and clearly, though with her pretty lisps, to read the short lesson.

"She must be older than she looks. Indian climate," he muttered.

Then he asked her to spell, and found that she had already mastered most one-syllabled words.

When the spelling ended she began of herself, "Twice one is two;" and, having completed her arithmetic, she hastily got off her seat, put her hands behind her, and repeated, "How doth the little busy bee."

"Dr. Watts himself was scarcely more precocious!" exclaimed the delighted Ap Adam, catching her up in his arms. "Carad, we will make a man of her—or a Lady Jane Grey,—and teach her Greek and Latin. She shall be my sixth boy."

And henceforth it was understood that Daisy was to receive from Mr. Ap Adam such an education as that gentleman thought it expedient to give her. On this, the occasion of her inauguration, she behaved well, and, when the other pupils arrived, was already learning a spelling lesson. Neither their smothered laughter nor whispered questions across the table could distract her from her task; and it was not until Ap Adam came down on the offenders with his cane that she looked up, and, seeing that ferule, shrank towards Caradoc for protection, while Michael took her hand on the other side.

"Daisy tan say it now," she said, in an unusually short time, fixing her dark blue eyes on Ap Adam; and she repeated her lesson faultlessly.

"Poor innocent! Her mother must have taught her," ejaculated Ap Adam, in Welsh. "After all, women are not born fools; it is want of education that makes them so." And, upon this reflection, he called Daisy to him, took her on his knee, and began to teach her Latin—which tends to show that, if he was not born a fool, he certainly was not born a schoolmaster.

As the morning wore on she showed signs of weariness, in spite of her efforts at self-control. Caradoc, first asking leave, took her to the low window-seat, and, producing her doll, together with a slice of bread and butter, left her there. She amused herself until twelve o'clock struck and lessons were done.

"She must be an only child, and accustomed to be without companions," mused Ap Adam.

All the boys surrounded her, and she shrank from the strangers, who were rough specimens of their genus. Mr. Ap Adam sent them off, and Caradoc seized the opportunity, as he always did, of a few words with his master.

"There is a sort of bell-tower at the end of the Esgair, sir,

in which one might hang a light to save many a ship," he began. "That point stretches farther out than any other, and if only there could be a beacon!"

"If! You romance, sir; keep within the region of the possible. Who could hang lights in such places?" responded Ap Adam.

"I could, sir."

"At the risk of your neck, and discovery by the wreckers."

"They would think it supernatural, sir; and, besides, it would not be seen from the shore."

"And the Earl? and Evan the Tower?"

"One must brave something, sir, to do good."

"Very Utopian; what next?"

"I should like to be a doctor, like you. It is grand to save life and ease suffering. If mother would consent to my leaving home, I think father would. Will you use your influence, sir?"

"To apprentice you to old James, and have you taught to make calomel pills and black draughts? I would rather see you turn the sod and write verses. You had better go home and eat your dinner. Good-bye, little Daisy; come again to-morrow."

Caradoc's fine face clouded at this rebuff; but he was not daunted. He did not, however, hear his master's soliloquy when he and his companions were gone.

"This is what I have done! Taught until I have made him discontented with his lot; explored until he would dare the most slippery precipices. I, who have fled from the world, sick of its temptations. I must undo my work, or seek refuge elsewhere."

Education seemed the topic of conversation at Craigavon that day. We hear of "a wave of crime," why not "a wave of learning"? It certainly flowed over farm and vicarage to the Castle. The Earl even was overtaken by it, and was discussing the momentous subjects of public school and college with Mr. Tudor.

"When a young nobleman condescends to play tricks on his inferiors, and scatters gold like sea-shells, it is time to send him from home," he said. "I can ill afford it, but Penruddock must go to Eton. You will need your vicarage, so I shall eject that fellow Ap Adam, who is a mere adventurer; and the parish will be well rid of him, for he is only educating the farmers' sons beyond their need. Young Pennant will be ruined."

"I think your lordship is right to send Lord Penruddock to school," said Mr. Tudor, cautiously; "it will do him good to associate with boys of his own rank. It may be also well for me to give my time to the parish, and to live in the midst of my flock."

"If I send him to Eton, I shall not be able to afford to do up the vicarage at present," rejoined the Earl. "You will be obliged to take it as it stands, or to get up a subscription amongst the people for repairs. Let those who go to church take care of it, and pay the parson. You will continue to act as my chaplain, and perhaps had better live here."

Before Mr. Tudor could utter either a protest or opinion, the Earl walked away. Such was his habit when he had finished what he had to say; and that was a bold man who dared to begin again a subject he considered concluded.

The Earl went straight to the Countess to tell her of his resolution concerning their son. He found her and Lady Mona in a quaint boudoir, the walls of which were hung with tapestry, representing shepherds and shepherdesses in a variety of costumes, and the ceiling of which was painted with similar pastoral figures. The room was bright, though the furniture was heavy and antique. There was a beautiful oriel window that looked through a vista of trees to Ogof Bay; and this view was the least wild of any seen from the Castle. As if there were not embroidery enough already within the old fortress, the Countess was working more. Her face and figure looked singularly young and graceful as she bent over her frame, which was placed in the oriel. Her daughter was on a low

stool, with a French lesson-book in her hand and her inseparable poodle on her lap. The Earl was proud of the grace and beauty of his womankind, and considered them as only secondary to his son and—his money. Indeed, beneath the crust of avarice lay something near akin to love for his wife and children, though they scarcely suspected it.

"Alicia, I have settled at last to send Penruddock to Eton, and thence either to college or on a foreign tour," began the Earl.

Her ladyship, who was not easily excited either by joy, grief, or surprise, looked up, and gently murmured in a sort of interrogative affirmative, "Yes?"

"You think I am right, Alicia?

"I suppose so; but we shall miss him, shall we not Mona?"

"I shall be glad, for he is such a tease," replied Mona. "Shall we take him with us to London, papa?"

"We must give up town again this year if Penruddock goes to Eton," said the Earl, contemplating the faded carpet; "I cannot afford both."

Mother and daughter glanced at one another. London had been unvisited the last two seasons on account of the Earl's poverty; and a journey to London in those days, with such an establishment as the Earl of Craigavon must take with him, certainly did cost a fortune.

"I wish I was introduced, and then we should be obliged to go," said Lady Mona, pettishly.

"You are too young to give an opinion; go to your governess," returned the Earl, severely; and Lady Mona unwillingly obeyed.

The Countess placidly continued her embroidery. It was a secret relief to her to feel that her son's education was at last decided, for he had been unmanageable at home.

"You are well, Alicia?" asked the Earl, glancing at her for a moment.

'Yes; and you? I heard you walking about last night,

and feared you had an attack of those horrible spasms. Had we gone to London you might have consulted a physician."

"It was nothing; they come and go, as I must," remarked the Earl, with a grim attempt at a jest and smile as he left the apartment, and went to an adjoining part of the Castle which he had appropriated to himself.

This was a tower which overlooked what was called, by some, Twryn y Megyn—the Nose of the Bellows; by other, Twyrin y Witch—the Witch's Nose; or what was, in fact, the extremity of the promontory. Hence the Earl could survey his little world of waters and rocks. Outside the basement was a terrace on which he was wont to pace, and it was here that the Countess believed she had heard him the previous night. From this terrace, private paths were hewn in the rocks on either side of the Castle, which led directly to the shores of Ogof and Ton, so that no one was safe from his lordship's supervision. In this particular part of the Castle were the subterranean passages and dungeons employed by chieftains of the olden times as places of retreat or imprisonment, but turned into warehouses of wreckage under the new *régime*. As the Earl kept his own keys, no one entered this, his peculiar territory, without his permission, and here he knew that he could be alone.

"I must get rid of them all," he soliloquised, or, more properly, thought, as he sat down at a bureau, then the orthodox writing-table, desk, and davenport combined. "This fellow, Ap Adam, is a spy, and dogs my steps; he shall go first. Then old Pennant's grandson and his Newfoundland. But for them, that child! ha! what was that? But for him, I should not send Penruddock away; but for him, no gold would have been left—no Evan disabled—no tower mounted. Curse those Pennants, they are always in my way; impertinent, meddling, canting hounds! No wonder I came into the earldom as poor as a Lack-land, when my ancestors granted those interminable leases at almost a nominal rent. But in less than a score of years they will end, and then! and then I shall

leave my son the richest noble in the land—be the richest myself, I mean; for I am a young man, and shall still be young when lease after lease has run out. Then David Pennant and that upstart boy will know that they cannot browbeat with impunity the Earl of Craigavon."

CHAPTER XII.

NOTICE TO QUIT.

MR. TUDOR was requested by the Earl to give Mr. Ap Adam notice to quit the vicarage, upon the plea that, as the living was his, he must eject the tenant. The task was not pleasant; still he could not refuse to do it without offending his own patron, and his mother's *apparent* benefactor. It was he, therefore, who wrote a polite letter to Ap Adam, regretting the necessity of asking him to vacate the vicarage—though it was the Earl who received such rent as the schoolmaster had paid.

Ap Adam took the notice coolly enough, shrugging his shoulders, and saying, "That is the Earl. I expected as much. I didn't set Evan the Tower's leg for nothing. Now I must continue my travels. I shall be sorry to part with Caradoc. Why must one feel sorrow and interest, in spite of one's best efforts to avoid them?"

But the Pennants were not so cool when they, in turn, heard from Mr. Ap Adam that he must give up his school with the vicarage.

"You won't leave us till you have polished off the boys?" said Farmer Pennant.

"And Daisy?" added his wife; for Daisy had been some time under tuition when the notice arrived.

"The boys will have more time to give to ploughing and sowing, and Daisy to the making of butter and cheese. Much more important and useful than anything I can teach them," rejoined Ap Adam.

"You are tired of us?" suggested the old farmer.

"No. The last years of my life have been the quietest, and almost the happiest, I ever passed. I have not known you and yours in vain, sir."

"Then you must not leave us," rejoined the old man. "David, we can hammer up the barn into a school-room, and find bed and board here for Master Ap Adam."

"Surely, father, if you will. But our friend may not like it," replied David Pennant.

"He likes genuine hospitality, at any rate," said Ap Adam, rising to hide some feeling that forced itself uppermost. "But you must consider—I must consider—one cannot take advantage;" and the reserved schoolmaster fairly broke down.

His companions had too much tact to continue the subject, and it was set aside for that day.

But when the Earl returned from taking his son to Eton, he heard that the tenant ejected from the vicarage had been welcomed at the farm, and that Mr. Ap Adam was continuing his scholastic labours at Brynhafod. This was written down in the book of his memory as another offence of the Pennants, to be avenged when the occasion offered.

But years passed, and no particular occasion occurred. To all appearance matters went on quietly around him. He himself grew more moody and restless, but, at the same time, riches increased from various sources. Wrecks continued at intervals, though, for some mysterious reason, less frequently than at the time when this tale began; old leases lapsed and new ones were granted—if granted at all—at an enormous increase ot rent; property reverted to him at the death of a distant relative, and he needed to stretch the utmost limit of his imagination to declare himself poor, when everybody knew that he must be rich. But no one dared to gainsay him. Your proud, reserved, uncompromising man wields a mighty sceptre. People are afraid of him, and although they may misdoubt him, they are silent.

It was so with the Lord of Craigavon. He was disliked by his equals and feared by his inferiors; still no one resisted

him—no one, indeed, knew exactly what to say about him. His reputation was negative. He did not entertain profusely; he was not benevolent; he would not extirpate the wreckers, root and branch; he did not build a lighthouse; he was not unkind to his family; he was not a genial man. What he was he managed to keep to himself, so that not even his wife knew. One thing, however, he was—devoted to his only son.

Although Lord Penruddock preferred school, college, foreign travel, anything to home, when once he had left the Castle, his father never crossed his will. Was he right or was he wrong? We have seen him as a boy, we have to consider him as a man, and in so doing must leap over the important years of adolescence, not only as regards his lordship, but the other youth of this our veracious history.

CHAPTER XIII.

ON THE ESGAIR.

ONE evening in Autumn a figure stood at the extremity of the Esgair. The signs both of sea and sky indicated a stormy night, and the wreckers were preparing their false lights for their diabolical work. The Esgair, as has been said, was the ledge of rocks that ran the farthest into the sea of any on that coast—farther even than the promontory on which Craigavon Castle stood. It was difficult and even dangerous of access, on account of the slippery nature of the rock in some parts, and its irregularity in others; still it was not unapproachable, though shunned by the superstitious on account of its name and the legends that appertained to it. Its highest point was a cone, surmounted by a sort of shelf of overhanging rock, which looked towards the sea, and was called *Cader y Witch*, or the "Witch's Chair." The back or concave of this chair alone was dimly visible from the land; the hollow or front from the sea. Latterly, the country-folk and fishermen declared that witches, fairies, corpse-candles, and all sorts of strange sights were visible on the Esgair. As the fairies were in those days universally believed in, most people imagined they had taken compassion on the mariners, and were struggling with evil, in order to save them from destruction. The "little men in green" were supposed to be the souls of such human beings as were not good enough for heaven, nor bad enough for the other place, so had their purgatory here, while permitted to aid in saving life and doing good. But their haunts were never invaded, though many a dweller amongst the vales and hills was said to have frequently seen them.

The fairy, or witch, as may be, that stood on the Esgair, was clad neither in green nor black, the fabled colours of the species, but wore the Welsh costume. She—for it was a woman—was dressed in the striped woollen of the country manufacture. The short petticoat and looped-up gown not only enabled their wearer to climb the rocks like a roe, but displayed a beautifully-shaped foot and ankle, while the short-hooded scarlet cloak and high black beaver hat protected her both from sun and shower. The figure beneath was tall, lithe, and graceful. The face—oh, what a face it was!—"beautiful exceedingly." Bands of sun-brown hair lay below the full lace border of the cap, and dark, straight eyebrows between the high white forehead and drooped eyelids. The cheeks were pink and round as health and youth could make them, while the line of features was regular as that of the statue of a Greek Venus. The eyes were not visible, for she was bending over some object with which her hands were engaged. These ungloved hands were sunburnt, and, though delicately shaped, seemed not unused to labour.

She stood near the Witch's Chair, on what would have appeared to most people a dangerous ledge of rock, but was to her evidently a place of security. Here and there patches of soil dotted the Esgair, and she had reached one of these; so that, whatever the danger of her scramble, she considered herself safe. She was stooping over some sort of hole, from the opening of which she had removed a flat stone, and whence she drew carefully what looked like an enormous lantern. Placing it within the Witch's Chair, she took from a large pocket, that lay beneath her short tucked-up gown, three or four packages. One contained a flask of oil and a wick, the other a tinder-box. From these she supplied and trimmed her monster lantern, and with much difficulty struck a light to kindle her wick. In days when there were no lucifer matches, or such-like appliances, some skill was needed to strike the flint with steel so as to let the sparks fall on the tinder beneath, and produce the desired flame. It was, however, done success-

fully on this occasion, and a powerful light soon blazed within the big lantern. Happily there was no wind with the brooding storm. Had there been, so fragile a figure could not have stood on the Esgair, and the tinder would not have kept alight. As it was, however, our young witch managed not only to keep her footing, but to hang her giant lantern beneath the stone canopy of her chair.

When this was done, she knelt down, and clasping her hands, and uplifting her eyes to the darkening sky, said aloud,

"Bless this beacon, O Lord, and save yonder ships from destruction; for His sake who stilleth the tempest. Amen."

The upturned eyes were deeply blue and lustrous, and gave expression to a face of singular loveliness.

Rising, she examined the fastenings of her lantern, and muttered,—

"Once more, Carad, *bach!*"

Apertures were chiselled in the rock, both above and at the back, to receive the iron-holders of the lantern, which were so inserted into them as to steady it, and which, being cast with the girders, were capable of resisting the winds. It was a wonderful contrivance, and must have cost the inventor much time and pains. Under no circumstances could the simple machinery have been seen from a distance without a telescope, and in the twilight that would not serve. That the light was, at least, dimly visible from afar was certain, because of the reputation the spot had suddenly again acquired for supernatural appearances. Will-o'-the-wisps, or, as the Welsh call them, corpse-candles, are common enough in all damp mountainous districts; so the sensible may have attributed this and similar lights to natural causes, but the ignorant to supernatural.

The sea raged below and the sky darkened above, when the young lamplighter turned from her work, and fearlessly recrossed the Esgair. She was sure of foot as a mountain sheep, and seemed to dare the precipices as if they were common field-paths. She evidently knew every step she had best take,

and in less than ten minutes was beyond the steep slippery rocks, and safe on the hill at the back. Then she ran up the rough mountain road, between serried ranks of prickly yellow gorse and heather—across a sheep-path on the down, where, like Scott's Ellen, she scarcely crushed the harebell, which rose "elastic from her airy tread"—and finally reached the road to Brynhafod.

"Good evening, miss; I know you by your whistle. Make you haste, or the storm will be upon you," said a cheery voice. "We're looking for a wreck to-night, and master has told us to be ready."

"Good-night, Moses. I didn't know I was whistling so loud," was the reply.

Our witch had been whistling a Welsh air, softly as a sleepy blackbird, and now turned it into a song. *Ar hyd y Nos*—"All through the Night,"—suddenly pierced the heavy air, in a sweet clear treble voice. No sooner had it begun, however, than it was interrupted by a joyful bark, and a big dog was upon her.

"Gwylfa! bad Gwylfa! Where have you been? Suppose I had fallen into the sea? Ah, I understand; you have been down to help. No wreck to-night, Gwylfa. Here comes the rain!"

"Where have you been, Daisy?" interrupted a voice, and a young man stood beside her. "You should not be out so late. I have been seeking you ever since I came in from the field. We have been obliged to stack the corn again, because of the threatening weather, and I worked till sunset, or I should have been after you before."

"I have been looking for the fairies again, Michael, as the Master says," laughed Daisy. "They keep me from harm. Oh! if I could but see them, and catch one, and bring her home, and put her in—in—a lantern! But how it pours!"

"Take my arm, Daisy, and let us run."

"Oh, Michael, you know you must not run. And now you will catch cold again, and it will be my fault! Mother told

me not to let you be out in the rain. If you have another of those horrible blisters, and have to be bled, I shall never, never forgive myself."

Michael and Daisy hurried through the rain, arm-in-arm, and finally reached Brynhafod, followed by Gwylfa. They were met in the passage by Mrs. Pennant and Marget.

"What have you been about, Daisy?" asked the one.

"I'll tell you what it is, Miss Daisy," began the other; "if you get wet, you shall be drying your own clothes."

"Oh! mother, I was only caught in the rain just in the road. Now don't scold, Marget; I will dry them all myself—but look to Michael," replied Daisy, whispering the last part of the sentence aside to Marget.

She ran up to her room, while Marget got possession of Michael.

Doubtless the reader knew from the first, despite the cunning of the writer, that the witch on the Esgair was Daisy. And the maiden was assuredly a witch and a daisy in one. The witch in the scarlet cloak and conical hat; the daisy when they were removed. Her delicate cheeks were pink and white, her pretty lace cap had pink ribbons in it, and her muslin apron was white as daisy petals. The furniture of her little room was also of white dimity; while a pink patchwork quilt of a most elaborate pattern covered the bed.

"It will be a horrible night," she said, glancing out of the window that faced the sea. "Shall Carad or the wreckers have the best of it? Why will the Earl keep that light in his tower? He can't be dressing for dinner, or undressing for bed."

She ran down to the hall, where she was greeted by old Farmer Pennant, who was smoking his pipe in the chimney-corner, with, "Ah! my Eye of Day, thou hast been much backbitten by thy elders. Why dost stop out in the rain? Now, don't break my pipe, child."

"Let me stuff it instead, grandfather," she cried, as she kissed the old man.

He was still hale as ever, though perhaps his hair was whiter than of old. There was a loud knock at the front door, and Daisy ran to open it.

"Will you give an old man shelter, Miss Daisy?" said a voice. "I shall never reach the Castle in this rain."

"Madoc, dear old Madoc, come in. What! you have your harp? Then you shall play for us! Grandfather, is it not delightful?"

A white-haired old man, bending under the weight of a harp, staggered into the hall. He was the Castle harper; for, even into the present century, the Welsh nobility and country gentry maintained their harpist, who played in the hall during dinner. The Earl's stipend was not large, and Madoc sometimes earned money elsewhere by playing at the neighbouring farms.

"Put down your harp and come and dry yourself, man," said old Farmer Pennant. "'Tis almost time you and I stopped work. We're over eighty, and when you die of age, I shall quake for fear."

"You'll neither of you die yet awhile. Give me that damp neckerchief, Madoc," said Daisy, taking a piece of swathing yellow calico from the old man's neck, and hanging it before the blazing fire. "How does the sea sound to-night?"

"Fearfully rough. Wind rising north-east," replied Madoc.

"On purpose to blow the ships on the quicksands," returned Daisy, pettishly, "just to favour the wreckers!"

"Thee must not say that, child. Thou knowest Who holds the tempest in the hollow of His hand," remarked the farmer.

"Yes, grandfather. But the wrecks are so awful; the drowned men so horrible! I cannot bear them!"

Michael came in. He had grown into a man—thin, pale, and thoughtful-looking. His hair was black and long, his eyes large and lustrous. It was no wonder that his poor mother was always anxious about him—she who had lost so many children from that mountain scourge, consumption. His eyes turned instinctively on Daisy.

"You did not get wet, dear?" he said.

"No, Michael. And if I had, I should not have minded. I am so strong, and love the wind and rain so much, that nothing hurts me. Is father at the bay?"

"He is on the look-out somewhere. Madoc, are there lights about among the cliffs?" asked Michael.

"I saw none to-night. But what is the fire on the Esgair, that the fishermen talk of? Farmer Morris told me that Twm, the oyster-dredger, told him it had saved a brig from Cardiff on the night of the last storm."

"Doubtless it is the Lord's fire," replied Mr. Pennant, reverently. "Where evil is, good comes to counteract."

Daisy's face flushed, and she went towards the door.

"Where are you going, Daisy?" said Michael, who was watching her.

"To get Madoc some hot spiced ale, and see after dry clothes for father. Then we will have some music."

She disappeared.

"Bless her! She gets prettier every day!" exclaimed Madoc. "All the youths of the country-side are in love with her."

"Too young—too young and hot-headed to think of love yet awhile—she can't be seventeen," said the old farmer; while Michael's pale face grew paler.

He bestirred himself, however, to place Madoc's harp near the old man in the chimney corner, and to fetch his own from the parlour, which he put at a little distance. Daisy soon returned with the hot ale, which Madoc drank with all his heart.

"Thou drinkest as thou playest, man, in earnest," laughed the farmer. "I wish I could see our Michael do that."

"Now, Madoc, you must play," said Daisy, imperatively. "You first, then Michael, then both together. It is delightful. We can forget the storm. Hark! how it blows! But there are no guns, as when I was cast ashore, mother *fach*!"

The girl shuddered. She knew all of her history that was

known, and was never tired of making Mrs. Pennant recite the story of her adoption at the farm.

Madoc began to play, and Marget stole in and took her favourite seat on the settle, while Mrs. Pennant went to her accustomed stool in the chimney-corner, knitting in hand. Daisy sat down beside her, and leaning her elbow on her knee, her cheek on her hand, listened; while the old farmer took his pipe from his mouth, and Michael stood by his own harp, attentive to Madoc, gazing at Daisy. When the aged harper ceased, Michael, at a word from Daisy, began to play; and then, as if inspired by their own music and the Welsh airs they loved so well, they played together.

"Now, Eye of Day, sing us 'Llwyn On,'" said Mr. Pennant.

"Play you, Michael," said Madoc; and the young man struck a few chords as an accompaniment.

Daisy's clear fresh voice rang through the hall. It was not quite uncultivated, and she, like Michael, had picked up a little music from old Madoc. When she ceased, the men clapped their hands, and the harper asked, "Is that the song you sang to my Lady Mona?"

"I have sung her many, Madoc. Do you know how she is?" replied Daisy.

"They say she is no better, and that my lord is going to London with her by-and-by."

"Hush! there is father!" exclaimed Daisy, starting up and running to the door. "What of the ships?" she added, as David Pennant entered, together with the moonlight.

"Safe! past the Esgair! No wreck to-night, little Daisy."

"Thank God!" cried the girl, clasping her hands, and hurrying to hide her emotion in preparations for supper.

She and Marget laid the meal, while Mrs. Pennant dozed in her favourite corner.

"You said we were past work, master, just now," quietly remarked the harper. "The Earl thinks so too. His lordship's tired of me, and wants to get rid of me."

"There's always a home for you at Brynhafod," returned old Mr. Pennant. "But the Earl won't turn you away, for very shame."

"He gets nearer and nearer every day," whispered Madoc, as if afraid of being heard.

"They say the young lord is a fine pull upon him," said David Pennant. "Well, Daisy, but you've given us a grand supper in honour of Madoc."

She had, indeed, made the board groan with good cheer, and stood to contemplate it with evident delight. Michael stood by her, and when they all sat down to supper seated himself by her side.

The old farmer said grace, and allowed no one but himself to lead family worship; so when supper was over, and cleared away, the household assembled as usual for reading and prayer. His voice faltered when he put up a special petition for the absent, but it resumed its strength when he offered praise for the stilling of the tempest.

"Now, Madoc, strike up the Old Hundredth," he said, when they rose from their knees; and all stood to join in the grand and familiar psalm.

Large tears were in Daisy's eyes as, putting her hand into Mrs. Pennant's, she murmured, "Oh, mother, if Carad were but here!"

CHAPTER XIV.

A SUMMONS TO THE CASTLE.

THE following morning, at dawn, Daisy was again on the Esgair, but not alone: Gwylfa was at her side. The old dog insisted on doing what his friends did, and more than they could do. Daisy had extinguished the still burning light, had replaced the big lantern in its hiding-place, carefully covered it up with its stony lid, and had seated herself in the Witch's Chair, to watch the sunlight spread gradually over the sea. The sun had risen behind the mountain at her back, and was slowly dispersing the mists that hung about it, and revealing the golden gorse and red and purple bracken and heather that covered the hill-side as with a many-coloured garment; revealing, also, the white sheep just awakening from sleep, and shaking the night dews from their fleece; revealing and arousing all nature, animate and inanimate. Daisy saw the shadows float softly over the sea, and then dance away with the lights; saw the sea-gulls poise, hover, dip, and rise from the waves; and saw the great eagle soar up from its eyry. Then she listened intently, for she heard a lark pouring out its little soul in a song of praise somewhere above her, "near heaven's gate;" and then she herself sang very softly, as if in unison, a verse of a Welsh hymn. Gwylfa put his head on her lap, fixed his eyes upon her, and listened.

There was a ship riding safely at anchor on the far horizon, and there were some fishing-smacks coming in from oyster-dredging towards Monad; but there were no bending masts or signs of wreck on the distant merfa, or sea-marsh. So Daisy's

young heart rejoiced, and her song of praise ascended cheerily from the lonely Esgair.

Gwylfa suddenly pricked his long ears, and glanced down the precipice. A whistle sounded from below, and when it reached Daisy, a few moments after it reached the sagacious dog, she rose, exclaiming, "Has he come, Gwylfa? How early he is!" and began a perilous descent to the beach instead of her usual homeward way across the Esgair.

In less than ten minutes her hand was grasped by her old friend and tutor, Mr. Ap Adam.

"I thought you were never coming back, and here you are at cockcrow," she began. "Why have you been so long? We have been wondering what had become of you."

"*You*, at least, need not wonder, Daisy, who are in the secret council, or rather have thrust yourself into it, and made of the duet a trio," he replied, smiling at the bright morning vision that greeted him. "I have been fishing and geologising from the Dinas to the Garth Mawr, and making acquaintance with lots of people."

"Could you see the beacon?" she asked, breathlessly.

"Yes. That brought me home so early, for I knew you would be here to extinguish it. Let us go back to breakfast."

The tide was out, and they walked along the beach.

"I have been staying at Glanhir, and making my observations," said Ap Adam. "I find that our beacon is called the 'Witch's Candle,' and that we are safe from discovery as long as it is believed supernatural. But the Earl will scarcely be misled, and his interest goes with the wreckers. If Carad were here, we should foil them all. But you must only venture at special seasons."

"Have you heard from him? When will he be at home?" cried Daisy, eagerly.

"I should think in a few months, for he is sure to pass."

"Then he will never leave us again."

Ap Adam shook his head. "He is too adventurous and aspiring to pass his life here, Daisy."

"He has promised mother."

"Only if she insists on it; and I scarcely think she can."

Daisy's dark lashes fell. She could not bear separation from her brother Carad. She did not know whether she loved him or Michael best; but he was her ideal of perfection—her brave, clever, unselfish, handsome protector and friend. Ap Adam glanced at her and sighed.

"My work again," he thought. "Even this child has learnt too much."

Yet he might have been proud of his work. Neither of the three pupils, to whom he had devoted himself during his residence at Brynhafod, had ever done anything to disgrace either him or their parents; and he loved them as if they were his children.

"You will not leave us again, sir?" said Daisy, uplifting her drooping eyelids, and displaying the violets beneath.

"My dear, you must understand me. As long as I could repay my friends for their kindness by my poor scholastic services, I remained willingly. If it were not for my miserable sight, I could make-believe to do farm-work by day, and set our beacon alight each night; but I am good for nothing but poring over old books and old stones; and I cannot eat the bread of dependence."

"I do not feel dependent, yet I am," said Daisy, flushing.

"You are their adopted daughter, and will be——" Ap Adam paused, but Daisy understood him.

She knew that he meant "will be their real daughter, when you are a little older, and marry Michael." She was young, but felt intuitively how well Michael loved her, and that everyone had settled their marriage some day. The thought always made her grave, but not unhappy; it was so natural. He was only a few years older than she, whereas Caradoc was almost a man when she was a child. Not that Michael had ever spoken to her of love other than a brother's; and Carad had not even seen her since she had grown up; and she looked on him as quite old, and superior to every one else. Still she dared not

ask herself which she loved best; and in the vulgar sense of "being in love," she had made no inquiry at all, needing none.

But it was Caradoc she had watched and followed all her life. While Michael ailed at home, she had scaled precipices, ascended mountains, forded brooks, collected curiosities with him. From him she had learnt to whistle, to ride, to drive, to climb trees, to perform many masculine acts; and with him she had acquired such knowledge as Ap Adam chose to teach her. She knew something of Latin and Greek—of history, geography, and poetry; she had a smattering of much knowledge, and a desire for more; but, when Caradoc left home, study was no longer the delight it had been.

It was while eagerly watching him and Mr. Ap Adam, and listening to their conversation, sometimes in Welsh, sometimes in English, that she had learnt the secret of the beacon; and, once learnt, Caradoc made her his confidante in this as in most things, on a promise never to betray confidence. No one else was to know the origin of the light on the Esgair, lest the knowledge should bring trouble.

When Daisy and Ap Adam reached the farm, breakfast was ready, and the men were coming from the field.

"I shan't trust you to help me churn again, Miss Daisy," said Marget, as they crossed the barton and entered by the backdoor; "your promises are pie-crustès, sure enough. And there's missus has had the dairy to see to, and she's as weak as a new-born calf."

"See what I've brought you, Marget," said Daisy.

"Lord bless us! here's the schoolmaster!" cried Marget, wiping her hands on her apron in order to shake Ap Adam's. "Well, I'm glad enough to see you, sir; but there'll be nothing but them dirty books now, and less work than ever in Daisy."

There was vehement welcome when Ap Adam appeared at breakfast.

"You may as well make away with yourself at once, man, as go scrambling about as you do, with your bad sight," said

old Pennant, when he had half shaken his hand off; "why can't you be content to read here? There are rooms enough, now Carad's away."

"Right, Mr. Pennant, I do but cumber the ground," said Ap Adam, who took, as a rule, a dejected view of life.

"There you are again!" exclaimed David Pennant; "why, you're not a bit improved. We cast off tares and stones and such refuse from our land, while we welcome you back to it."

Ap Adam smiled.

"And they don't turn even a helpless old man away, sir," said Madoc the harper, staying a large piece of ham on a steel fork, as it was about to make its way to his mouth.

"Nor a helpless young woman," put in Daisy, courtesying demurely towards Mrs. Pennant, as she stood behind the old farmer to pour him out a mug of ale. "Here we are, the three degrees of comparison—young, younger, youngest; housed, more housed, most housed."

"Ha! ha! see what a scholar you've made of her," laughed David, who, like the rest of the household, not only did his best to spoil Daisy, but to make her vain.

"She supplied my deficiencies. The master never could turn me into a scholar," remarked Michael, looking tenderly at Daisy.

"You were too weakly to learn; you were ever a sickly lamb," said Mrs. Pennant. "But Carad! Ach! There's clever he is!"

The good woman always roused up at the thought of Carad.

"What's the good of his talents if he carry them away from home?" said David, wrathfully; and Daisy glanced at Ap Adam.

When breakfast was over she had enough employment. In the first place she washed up the breakfast things, then she helped Mrs. Pennant to make the beds.

"Why did you put old David into Carad's room?" she asked. "He might have meddled with his property, and then wouldn't Carad have been angry!"

"You know, my dear, I always keep the bed made and the sheets aired in case he should come back of a sudden," replied Mrs. Pennant, who never expected notice of her son's return.

"Ah, mother, how you love him! So do I. Everybody loves Carad. Yet he was naughty sometimes."

"I think it was mostly you who led him into mischief. Carad's wild and daring; but, Daisy! *Ach yn wir!*"

Mrs. Pennant smiled, and Daisy, fancying a reproof, coloured hotly.

"I shall dust his room, mother," she said; and Mrs. Pennant left her to her work.

Daisy had helped to collect most of the strange medley of curiosities that filled this apartment, and knew, therefore, their value in the eyes of Caradoc. There was one shelf covered with specimens from the mineral kingdom, another the vegetable, a third the animal.

"I cannot bear these," muttered Daisy, turning from the bottles which contained wonderful creatures preserved in spirits; "but Carad never killed them; he could not do that."

The book-shelf apparently interested her most, for, as she took down one volume after another from the small library, she opened each and forgot her work in it. Many passages were marked, and these she read, often exclaiming, "So like him! Dear Carad!"

But for her peculiar education, it would have been strange to see her poring over a Latin book as intently as a Welsh or an English one; but she was apt at languages, and her masters had taught her well.

"Here's Morris the Castle," were the words that suddenly roused her from her inopportune studies; and Marget put her head in at the door. "She says she wants you, and I says you're busy; but I didn't tell the lie knowingly, for I thought you were at work."

Daisy started as if taken in a crime. There was dew in the violets as she gazed up at Marget.

"I'm thankful I can't read!" was Marget's exclamation. "I

see no good in books but to make one idle. Read instead ot dusting; read instead of spinning; read instead of mending the stockings—that's what Miss Daisy and other learned magpies do. When I put her into the tub that night I never could have believed she'd turn into such a lazy cuckoo."

"Who did you say wanted me, Marget?"

"Morris, lady's maid, the Castle."

"What for?"

"I didn't ask her—I'm not liking her well enough. She's as smooth and fine as a peahen in her grey and white, and talks about as squeaky."

Daisy laughed with a ring that startled the curiosities.

"Fine for you to laugh while missus does the work!" said Marget, offended, and hurrying down the passage.

Daisy found Lady Mona's maid, Morris, in the hall awaiting her. She shook hands with her; but Daisy had a way of her own that repelled familiarity when she did not desire it, and of this Mrs. Morris was only too conscious. She was always trying to patronise Daisy, and trying to no purpose. She made a point of speaking English when she could, and her accent and idioms were decidedly national.

"Lady Mona is sending me to ask you to come to the Castle this afternoon, Miss Pennant; her ladyship is feeling dool now the company has gone."

"Is Lady Mona better?" asked Daisy.

"Well, she is feeling better, Miss Pennant, when she is being amused, and that is why she is sending for you. Her ladyship the Countess is requesting you to come."

Daisy's spirit rebelled at the manner of the summons, but she did not venture to disobey.

"At what hour, Miss Morris?"

"As soon as you can after luncheon, Miss Pennant. Sure, my lady is very condescending to be asking you—quite an honour, as everybody is saying; but then her ladyship do like to be hearing the news."

"I am sure I never have any; but I am glad if I can be

of use to Lady Mona," said Daisy, rather abruptly—for she had a singularly straightforward manner, and seldom hesitated to speak her thoughts. "I will just run and ask mother first."

She found Mrs. Pennant in the dairy.

"Mother, Marget has been scolding me for idling, and now I am come to ask if I may go to the Castle. It sounds grand, but I think I would rather not go; I don't like entering by the postern, as if I were a servant."

"You might take the tenants' door, Daisy. But you must not be proud."

"It is not pride, mother; but the men look at me as I pass, and make their remarks. They are grander than my lord, and much more familiar. It was all well while Carad was at home and took me, for they were afraid of him. He was really more noble than the Earl, and conducted himself as well as Lord Penruddock."

"Is the young lord at home, Daisy?"

"They never send for me when he is at home, mother; and you know he has not been at the Castle for two or three years. I should like to speak to him, he looks so free and handsome."

"Fie, Daisy! it is not befitting young girls to talk so of young men, especially their betters. You must tell Miss Morris you will be very happy to wait upon Lady Mona. Besides, you will see Miss Manent."

"Come and say it for me, mother. No; I am not sure that I shall see Miss Manent. She goes sometimes to Maesglâs to visit Mrs. Tudor."

"Sure, they say Mark Tudor is fond of her, but that the Earl won't let them marry. They've been acquainted long enough."

Mrs. Pennant accompanied Daisy to the hall, and made a formal speech to Morris, to the effect that Daisy should "wait upon Lady Mona."

"You will take a glass of ale or mead, and a piece of cake, Miss Morris," said Mrs. Pennant, with customary hospitality;

for none were thought to do their duty at the farm who declined to eat and drink there.

"It is rather early, Mrs. Pennant; but I've no objections," replied Morris, in Welsh this time. "A glass of mead, if you please."

Daisy went to a cupboard in the wainscoted side of the hall, and took out a decanter and glasses, which she placed on an elaborately-gilt tray that stood on end on a neighbouring table. Then producing some rich home-made cake, she carried the tray to the large table. She then poured out two glasses of mead, or metheglin, as it was called, and gave one to Morris, the other to Mrs. Pennant, who would not have considered it polite to allow her visitor to drink alone.

"Your good health, Mrs. Pennant," said Morris, elegantly sipping the strong home-made honey-sweet mead.

"The same to you, Miss Morris, and better health to my Lady Mona," returned Mrs. Pennant.

When Morris had departed, Mrs. Pennant's first and womanly idea was Daisy's dress; so—as Marget expressed it—"More time was lost in trying on that new silk gown than the gown and Daisy were worth." Nevertheless, Daisy had resumed her ordinary attire for the twelve-o'clock dinner, when the men, Ap Adam inclusive, came in hot and tired from the wheat-harvest. It must therefore be conceded, in spite of Marget's counter-opinion, that Daisy had done a good morning's work between the time when she stood on the Esgair, and the mid-day meal. She looked, too, as girls who work with a will usually do, all the better for it; and it is not surprising that Michael should take her hand and say, with his soft voice and gentle manner, "You look as fresh as a rose, my Daisy."

CHAPTER XV.

FEARLESS.

EVER since that first visit, when she lost her locket and chain, Daisy had been in the habit of going from time to time to the Castle. When Lady Mona's life was unusually dull and monotonous, she sent for Daisy to enliven it; and the fearless *naïveté* of the child of the farm amused the young lady of the Castle. As Daisy grew up, the Countess, also, admitted her to the somewhat melancholy grandeur of her apartments, and so she became in some sort privileged, if not exactly as guest, at least as familiar dependant. Not that she would have owned herself a dependant. She belonged to the principal farmer of the district, and was independent as the Lady Mona herself; but she was willing to subserve to the rank she had been taught to honour. Her peculiar education and surroundings gave a tone to her mind and manners that made her sufficiently ladylike never to offend even the refined taste of the Countess; and even when, now and again, she accidentally met the Earl, he failed to find any special flaw in her conduct at which he could take exception. And he did perseveringly seek such a flaw; for he objected to her visits to the Castle, though he could give no sufficient reason why, the more especially as she never came without messages of duty from Mrs. Pennant, and a basket of the choicest ot the farm produce. Of course it was impossible always to conceal her presence from the Earl when she came to the Castle, so he was given to understand that she not only amused his daughter, but helped on her education, and prevented her pining for other companions. But it was easy to see that he

disliked Daisy, and was more moody than usual when he by chance stumbled upon her.

In spite of clever arrangements to the contrary, he met her as she was tripping over the stony road on the day we have just reached. He was on horseback, and would have been at a distance but for an unexpected delay. His groom was behind him—and Daisy thought the Earl a very grand-looking gentleman, albeit she did not like him particularly. But she did not fear him, as did every one else. Why should she? She had never done anything to injure or offend him.

She was about to pass him with the country curtsey she had somehow managed to make graceful, when he stopped to speak to her. He knew that English was as familiar to her as Welsh, thanks to Ap Adam and the Lady Mona, so he addressed her in that language, which his groom could not understand.

"Morning, Miss Pennant. I hear that Madoc, my harper, was at Brynhafod last night," he began.

"Yes, my lord. He was overtaken by the storm, and grandfather made him stay," replied Daisy, quietly, but without hesitation.

"He is past work. Will you tell Farmer Pennant that I should like his son, who I hear plays the harp, to take his place."

"Yes, my lord; but Michael is not strong. He seldom goes out at night."

"Some one goes out at night, if he does not. But you will deliver my message. Where are you going?"

"To the Castle, my lord. My Lady Mona has sent for me."

"What have you in your basket?"

"Some new-laid eggs and fresh butter, and a bottle of cream, my lord, which mother hopes my Lady Mona will be pleased to accept, because she says unexpected food delights the sick."

"Nonsense! Lady Mona is not sick."

"Oh, my lord!"

As Daisy uttered this interjection, she suddenly raised her eyes to the Earl and met his. There was a sort of reproach in her tone and look, but nothing disrespectful. His eyes fell instantly, and his countenance changed. Still he did not move on, but continued in a low, severe voice,

"That Ap Adam was also with you last night. Where did he come from?"

"Maesglâs, my lord."

"What was he doing there?"

"Surveying the country, I believe, my lord."

The Earl was now treading very near Daisy's secret; still she was fearless, for she knew that she could keep it.

"Surveying? I thought he was a doctor."

"He knows everything, my lord."

"He knows too much. Does he know the nature of the light on the Esgair?"

"I think so, my lord."

"What does he say it is?"

"He calls it the witch's bonfire."

"Does he say why it is there? He has the reputation of 'a wise man of the mountain.'"

"He says it burns to save the ships, and circumvent the wreckers."

Daisy in her fearless truthfulness had circumvented the Earl, even while her heart beat rapidly with terror lest he should ask what she dared not answer. His face looked grim and ghastly, she thought, as he rode on, and put no more questions; and hers was more thoughtful than it had been when she met him, as she pursued her way. She was grieved that Michael should be asked to do what he would dislike, and distressed that even the Earl should misrepresent the master. Although, during all these years, no one had learnt his history, she and her friends were sure that he was a good and true man; and were annoyed that, owing to the ignorance and superstition of the peasantry, he should be reputed supernaturally wise. He laughed at this, and used his knowledge

to do such good as he was able, regardless that some of his experiments were before his age and the people amongst whom he dwelt.

When Daisy had passed through the ordeal of crossing the side court and being stared at by the servants, she was escorted by Morris to the tapestried chamber, where she found the Countess and Lady Mona. To tell the truth, Morris was jealous of Daisy, and when she left her within the door with the words "Miss Pennant, my lady," she closed it unwillingly, with the addition of "I wonder what they can have to say to such a pert chit."

Daisy made her pretty curtsey, and stood still a moment, her basket on her arm. The Countess was seated at her embroidery in the window, as usual; Lady Mona was lying on a couch, a book in her hand. But Lady Mona started up quite briskly, and said—"Come here, Daisy. What have you got? Butter? I cannot eat ours. Eggs? We never get fresh ones. Cream? We are never allowed cream. And such sweet flowers! Did you grow those carnations and roses, Daisy? Mine die under the east winds and sea air."

"I planted them myself. And, if you please, my lady," said Daisy, turning from Lady Mona, who had seized upon her, to the Countess, "mother asks your pardon for the liberty, but she sends this with her duty, thinking Lady Mona——"

"Yes, Daisy, I will eat it all!" interrupted her ladyship, laughing. "But where did you get that lovely silk gown? It is quite new, and so becoming. Look, mamma, how it suits her. I haven't one half as pretty. I never have anything pretty."

"You really should not say so, darling," remarked the Countess. "But it is pretty. How long have you had it, Daisy?"

"Father brought it me from town last June fair, my lady, and Miss James, the dressmaker, has just been to make it up," replied Daisy, blushing.

"Put your hat and cloak on the table in the corner, Daisy," said Lady Mona, "Look, mamma, she is quite like a lady in her new dress."

In those days the aristocracy alone said "Mamma." It was their privilege; now we are reversing it.

"Daisy always looks nice," said the Countess, smiling and nodding.

"You never say that of me," said discontented Lady Mona.

"Ah! but your ladyship is so beautiful!" exclaimed Daisy, quite naturally, and looking admiringly at Lady Mona.

Daisy was not far from the truth. The Lady Mona had grown up into a woman so delicately fair and elegant that it was impossible not to admire her. Even the discontented, peevish expression that sometimes passed into her face scarcely disfigured it, because it was supposed to arise from ill-health, and was excused or humoured accordingly. Her mother adored her; Miss Manent worshipped her, in a way; the servants yielded to her least wish; and even her father rarely contradicted her. He was always ready to promise to pleasure her, though he rarely kept his promises.

"Pray sit down," said the Countess, for Daisy was still standing.

Young people stood long in those times in the presence of either rank or age.

Daisy seated herself near Lady Mona's sofa, and her bright healthful face contrasted with her ladyship's pale, languishing beauty. Both were "fair as fair could be," but wholly different in person and mind. There was contrast even in the grace of their figures, which bespoke the contrast within. The one was light, easy, unconscious movement; the other, dreamy, wearisome, selfish repose—results of a healthy and unhealthy life. Farmer Pennant roused and made useful all Daisy's good qualities; the Earl depressed the Lady Mona's. Still she was not deficient in them, and, with more freedom of life, would have been as happy in her station as Daisy in hers. Although some five or six years older than Daisy, she looked

as young; for she looked younger, Daisy older, than her years. If she was really an invalid, it was more from *ennui* than illness, for her father's peculiar habits rendered friendly intercourse with their equals difficult, if not impossible; and the stately interchange of visits that took place at regular intervals was rather wearisome than amusing.

The picture in the tapestried chamber was a pretty one. The Countess at her frame in the oriel, in her rich brocade and lace, her hair just beginning to whiten beneath her cap; Lady Mona, half reclining on the sofa, in some soft silken pink gown, and hair drawn off her fair face; and Daisy in her high-backed chair, demure and *posée*, her mob-cap on her stately head, her basket at her side. The white poodle was no more, and had been replaced by a dainty King Charles, actually named Puff, in remembrance of Daisy's first ejaculation at sight of Blanche; and the new pet slept on Lady Mona's sofa.

Lady Mona inherited her father's inquisitiveness, so she set to work at once to ask questions concerning every person and thing she knew either by sight or name.

"When is Farmer Pennant's eldest son, Caradoc, coming back?" she began. "Surely they must have made a doctor of him by this time."

"Mr. Ap Adam says that 'walking the hospitals' is a very long walk indeed," replied Daisy, "but it must end in time. Carad is walking them still."

The Countess laughed gently.

"I wish I might have Mr. Ap Adam to prescribe for me. Morris says he cures every one, and practises charms and curious arts. That would be amusing."

"Indeed she is mistaken, my lady. Mr. Ap Adam is a God-fearing man, and I assure your ladyship that he only uses herbs and such medicines as he procures from the druggist's."

"What do you mean by a 'God-fearing man?' You use very Puritanical language, Daisy."

"I mean that he fears God and believes his Holy Word

too sincerely to deal with witchcraft, which the Bible forbids. You remember how that Simon and Elymas, the sorcerers, gave up their craft when they believed, and the men who used the 'curious arts' burned their books. Indeed Mr. Ap Adam is a true Christian."

"Pray don't preach, Daisy. I suppose you learn that rom old Mr. Pennant and young Michael, who, they say, preaches to the people at Monad."

"Because they are so wicked and will not go to church," said Daisy, gravely. "If you had ever seen a drowned man, Lady Mona, you could not help preaching. But then your ladyship was never nearly drowned, as I was, and never lost all that belonged to you in the deep waters. When I think of it, I also long to bear my testimony against those who defy the Lord."

"Your education has made you too learned for your position, Daisy," interrupted the Countess. "You must not excite Lady Mona with such subjects."

"Very well, my lady," replied Daisy, obediently; at which Lady Mona laughed, and rejoiced her mother's heart.

"You shall come to London with me in the spring," cried Lady Mona. "The Earl has positively promised to take us at last. You shall—let me see, what can you do? You shall nurse Puff when I am at theatres and balls, and drive with me sometimes. You would create a sensation in your Welsh costume."

"I should be afraid to go to London; the journey is so long. I could not part from mother," returned terrified Daisy.

"It is only three weeks. We can post the whole way in three weeks. But you must go if I wish, you know, for no one dares to disobey us."

Lady Mona emphasised the monosyllable haughtily. Daisy coloured, and did not feel so humble as perhaps she ought. It was not unusual for the young people to disagree, for they had not much really in common; and Daisy had by nature

a resolute spirit, not easily put down when it was a question of justice.

"You shall have all you wish, darling," said the Countess, soothingly.

"All I wish! never! never!" cried Lady Mona, starting up with sudden energy. "I have nothing that I wish. We live the lives of nuns and hermits, and I would exchange all the grandeur of Craigavon for Daisy's freedom and Daisy's health."

Lady Mona sat down again, and began to sob hysterically, as she often did when anything crossed her. The Countess was instantly at her side.

"Say you will go to London if she wishes," she whispered to Daisy.

"I cannot, your ladyship, for I do not know that I should be allowed," replied Daisy, firmly.

"What a fool I am! There is nothing the matter really," said Lady Mona. "Daisy, ring the bell, and we will order your basket to be removed and the flowers to be put in water. We can settle the London question when the time comes. The Earl says that all at Brynhafod are obstinate mules."

She spoke disdainfully, as if ashamed of herself and annoyed with her companions. The bell was rung, the basket removed, the flowers arranged, and she returned to her inquiries nonchalantly.

Daisy was soon tolerably at her ease again, and was answering some indifferent question in her clear musical voice, when the door, towards which her back was turned, opened suddenly.

"Penruddock!" exclaimed the two ladies simultaneously, rising and hurrying towards the in-comer.

Daisy also rose, and turning saw the Countess and Lady Mona embrace a gentleman, whom she recognised as Lord Penruddock.

"And no other!" he answered gaily, looking at his mother and sister. "But, Mona, you are not so ill as you report

yourself. I have actually come from the sweet South because your letter made me think you dying."

"I am glad of any exaggeration that brings you back," said the Countess, roused into unexpected life and cheerfulness. She is ill, but not dying."

"She only wants a change from these gloomy walls. I have asked lots of people down for the hunting, and they will soon cure her."

"Who?" asked Lady Mona, eagerly.

"The Staveleys, and Colonel Egerton, and Lord FitzGeorge, and Everard, and——"

While a vivid flush overspread Lady Mona's face, Lord Penruddock suddenly perceived Daisy. She had moved to put on her hat and cloak, feeling intuitively that her presence was no longer required. He saw her first in profile as she stood near the table, her scarlet cloak in her hand. He judged her, from her carriage and dress, to be a visitor, but was puzzled when she hastily put on the cloak and high hat.

"Who is that?" he whispered to his mother.

"Miss Pennant," she replied.

"The little waif?"

The Countess nodded.

Daisy paused irresolute, then turning, perceived that she was the object of attention for the moment. With a sort of distinguished manner, peculiar to her in an emergency, she advanced towards the Countess, and said,—

"I think I had better go, my lady."

"Perhaps so, Daisy. Good morning."

"Won't you introduce me, mother?" asked Lord Penruddock, looking with surprise at Daisy.

"Miss Pennant. Lord Penruddock," said the Countess, smiling, though annoyed.

Daisy blushed, and made her peculiar reverence, while his lordship removed his hat, forgotten in the hurry of greeting his relations. So Daisy saw him near at last. She looked towards Lady Mona, who was pre-occupied, apparently, with

her dog; then she went to the door. Lord Penruddock opened it, and walked by her side down the corridor.

"Is Caradoc Pennant at home?" he asked abruptly.

"No, my lord, he is in London," she replied.

She was about to turn down the passage by which she went and came, when he stopped her, and said that she was taking the wrong turning.

"I always go this way, my lord," she replied.

"But I do not, and shall accompany you to the gate, if you will allow me," he rejoined.

"I have left my basket, and mother enjoined me to bring it back."

Lord Penruddock smiled. "I will order it to be sent after you," he said.

But Daisy, trained by the law of obedience as well as love, hesitated. He saw it, and added,—

"I will have it brought you, if you will come this way. You are not a Pennant, but I see you have their obstinacy."

"They are not obstinate, my lord, but true to the right," she returned firmly, yet with no assumption.

"All truth would be pleasant from your lips," he rejoined, and led her down the chief corridor to the grand staircase; thence to the great hall, with its painted ceiling and men in armour.

"Ask for Miss Pennant's basket," he said to a servant in waiting; then, turning to Daisy, added, "It is strange that I should never have spoken to you before. Did Caradoc or Michael Pennant ever tell you of our encounters by flood and field."

"Never, my lord."

"Did they ever tell you how beautiful you are?"

"Certainly not, my lord. They would not be so bold."

Daisy's face flushed, and her manner became so dignified that Lord Penruddock gazed at her with some surprise.

"Others have probably made you acquainted with the fact?"

"No, my lord. I am not used to compliments. Here is my basket."

Her manner was quite self-possessed, and as she advanced to meet the man who brought her basket, his lordship wondered more and more. The liveried menial wondered also, but did not venture to speak or look in return for Daisy's "Thank you. I am sorry to have given you trouble." She passed through the hall, her basket on her arm. When she reached the ponderous doorway, she turned, curtseyed, and went into the court. This was quadrangular and battlemented, light being admitted through each eyeleted merlon. Lord Penruddock followed her, and opened the great gates. He held out his hand as she went through, but she did not give hers in return. She curtseyed again, and with a "Good afternoon, my lord," pursued her way homewards, saying to herself proudly and hotly, "Mother was right. I wish I had not seen him. I am punished for my curiosity and forwardness. Did he think me bold that he said such words? Carad and Michael, indeed! They love me too well to be so silly. I shall go no more to the Castle while he is there."

CHAPTER XVI.

IN THE WAGON.

IN the midst of her lucubrations Daisy met Miss Manent, accompanied by Mr. Tudor. She was warmly greeted by both; but Miss Manent asked, in affright, if she were late, since Daisy was on her way home. Daisy explained why she had left the Castle earlier than usual, and went on her way. We must leave her for a short space, and join the parson and the governess, as they walk, side by side, slowly towards that lordly seat.

When Lord Penruddock went to school, Mr. Tudor left to reside with his mother, who lived with her family at the steward's house, some two or three miles from the sea, but in the heart of the Earl's property, and in Craigavon parish. When Mr. Tudor gave Ap Adam notice to quit the vicarage, he was in hopes that the Earl might help to repair it, but he did not. On the contrary, he suggested—in other words ordered—that Mr. Tudor should live with his mother, and aid her in the stewardship until his brother was of age—promising to build him a new vicarage when that period was reached. Mr. Tudor demurred, but the Earl said that he must procure another steward if he could not fall into this arrangement. A fresh steward meant ruin to his mother, brother, and sisters; so he consented. He had hoped to be free to attend to his parish, but he was still hampered by secular work. He was also farther than ever removed from Monad, which he felt to be a blot in his parish, and the poor vicarage, his proper home, was falling more and more to decay, and tenanted by one of

the Earl's bailiffs. He still officiated as chaplain at the Castle, and could therefore only give one service at the church; so that, without any fault of his own, save that of irresolution, his parish was neglected. It was reported that he was attached to Miss Manent, but if so, irresolution, or fear of the omnipotent Earl, still prevailed; for, if he had told her so, which no one ventured to affirm, there were no declared results.

Miss Manent, however, was much brighter and prettier than when we first made her acquaintance. Whether she was engaged to Mr. Tudor or not, hope had appeared at the bottom of her very deep well; and, strange to say, it dawned with Daisy. She generally either fetched the child from the farm, or took her back, and on these occasions she was always hospitably welcomed by the Pennants, and usually met, by some singular coincidence, Mr. Tudor. He not unfrequently sipped the mead with her in the Brynhafod parlour, and possibly while drinking her health, drank in something else: for he had discovered the dove-like softness of her eyes on that day when she had first taken Daisy back to the farm. Hope and Love equally give courage, and one day, when the Countess and Lady Mona were to be many hours absent, she had taken heart to ask leave to pay Mrs. Tudor a visit, and had received it. But that lady, being a woman of business and a managing mother, had not welcomed her so warmly as her son could have desired. She had, nevertheless, at his particular request, invited her from time to time, and when Daisy met her she was returning from a hasty call at Maesglâs, attended by the Vicar. We will take up the thread of their conversation just where Daisy broke into it.

"I believe they really are going to London in the spring, and I am to remain with Lady Mona until then," said Miss Manent. "I hope I may not have followed your advice quite in vain."

"In what way did I advise you?" asked Mr. Tudor.

"You said that it would be a grand thing to make of those children a noble man and woman; and I have tried to do

my best," she replied, blushing. "I trust I may do better in another situation. The Countess promises to procure me one."

"Another situation! You must not—you shall not! The Vicarage——" stammered Mr. Tudor, and paused.

She evidently did not understand him, for she added,—

"I have no home, no relatives, and few friends. The Pennants are my best, and—perhaps—your mother."

"And, assuredly, my mother's son! Oh, Miss Manent, but for the meshes the Earl winds round us all, I should have spoken to you long ago——"

"Hush! there he is! Good-bye," said Miss Manent, hurrying away, as Lord Craigavon appeared in the distance.

"I must summon courage and ask him at once," soliloquized Mr. Tudor.

The Earl was riding down the principal road to the Castle, and Mr. Tudor had parted with Miss Manent on the side-path, so he hoped that she might have escaped notice. But nothing escaped Lord Craigavon. Although his eyes seemed ever turned earthward, he saw and knew everything. Mr. Tudor went towards him, and, after the usual salutations, began his request with resolution, as he turned and walked by his side towards the great gates, through which Daisy so lately made her exit.

"I have been wanting to speak to you for some time about the Vicarage, my lord. You were so good as to say you would either repair it or build another, when my brother was old enough to take the stewardship."

"What can you want with a Vicarage? You are with your mother, and in your parish?" asked the Earl.

"I wish to settle, my lord."

"Not to marry Miss Manent. She is not suitable. I should not help you to such a settlement. Besides, Mona wants her."

"Your lordship must know she is a lady, and has conducted herself admirably all these years," said Tudor, hotly.

"I know nothing about her, except that she is not a fitting

wife for the vicar of this parish. However, that is not to the point. I am too poor to do anything to the Vicarage at present, for this London journey and season will take all my ready money. I will think about it when we return. Your brother knows nothing of his work. He underlet Maesteg the other day, and will ruin me if he goes on at that rate. You must help him to do his work, or we must find some more efficient steward."

"I have my own stewardship, my lord, and I dare no longer neglect it."

"See to it by all means, and I must see to mine. But I hear Lord Penruddock has returned, and I cannot lose more time."

The Earl rode haughtily off, without even a good day, and Mr. Tudor resumed his way with a sort of hopeless pensiveness in his face. What was he to do? Brave the Earl and perhaps ruin his family, or continue the middle course he had kept so long without definite results? Let the girl he loved go forth upon the pitiless great world, or marry her in spite of the little world that surrounded him?

As he was debating these questions he entered upon the large farm of Brynhafod, which was separated by the brook, before-mentioned, from what was called the park. Sauntering up the meadow, he came upon the wheat-field, nearly cleared of its sheaves. This had been one of David Pennant's experiments, which had so answered as to increase tenfold the value of his property. It had been originally common land to the top of the hill, and he had reclaimed it, turned it into profitable wheat-land.

There was an empty wagon and four horses at the bottom ot the hill, surrounded by a little group of people. Mr. Tudor made for it, and found the three Pennants, Ap Adam, and Daisy, together with Big and little Ben. They were all going up the hill for the last load, and were about to get into the wagon when Mr. Tudor joined them.

"I have tucked up my best gown, grandfather," he heard

Daisy say; and as he looked at her picturesque figure he sighed, for he feared that his brother, like the rest of the youths of the parish, was losing his head for her.

"Here's the parson?" cried old Pennant. "Just in time for the last load, Mr. Tudor. Come with us to fetch it, and then return and have a bit of supper—not the harvest-home to-night, but just a snack by way of whetting the appetite."

Mr. Tudor assented, and the party were soon in the wagon, Daisy jumping up with the ease of one who had been used to such feats all her life. She sat down on the rungs between the old man and Michael on one side, the three others opposite; the two Bens walked by the horses. The hill was steep, and difficult of ascent, so they were well jolted over the furrows. Now Daisy was hurtled against the farmer, who put his arm round her; now against Michael, who never ventured such a familiarity. She was sadly anxious about the new gown, and kept it turned up like a balloon, lest wheel or spoke should touch it.

"You shall have another when that is worn out," said the farmer, laughing.

"But mother will be angry if I hurt it," returned Daisy.

"Something has gone amiss with you, parson," said David Pennant—"is it the Earl, or the parish, or Owen, or the world in general? Out with it; we are all friends here."

"It is the Vicarage, farmer. I want it repaired or rebuilt, and can't get it done," replied Tudor.

"In other words, the Earl declines, and you ejected me to no purpose," said Ap Adam, drily.

"It was not my fault. I wish you were there still," returned the despondent parson.

"But the parish should have a voice in the church and vicarage; and it is time we saw to the old barns," said David Pennant. "I wager the Earl would not object to our doing his work. It will take time, though. A lady in the case—eh, parson?"

Mr. Tudor sat between the farmer and Ap Adam, and

received a sly poke in the ribs from the one, and a nudge from the other. He coloured uneasily.

"I know all about it. A very decent, respectable young woman. Very kind to Daisy. My missus very fond of her. Make a good parson's wife," continued the farmer. "If she should want a home for a time, now Lady Mona's grown up she can come to Brynhafod."

"You will have a houseful of us!" ejaculated Ap Adam. "Remember my black Venus takes up one room. What a jolt! Beg your pardon, Daisy; couldn't help it."

Daisy had been thrown over into the parson's lap, and there was a general laugh.

"We can put Daisy with Cleo—— name o' goodness! what's the rest of her name? My memory fails sadly," said the old man.

"Cleopatra, grandfather," laughed Daisy.

Mr. Tudor's face cleared, and a discussion ensued as to the possibility of doing up the Vicarage; but all were of opinion that the Earl's permission must be obtained first.

"Then you will never rebuild it," put in Ap Adam, significantly. "It is well situated for a bailiff's residence, and overlooks a point that brings salvage to my lord."

"He called you a witch to-day, master," said Daisy; "and said you knew too much."

Whereupon Daisy was requested to detail the conversation she had had with his lordship, which she did; not forgetting his demand upon Michael.

"Since you are so glib with lords and ladies, Daisy," remarked Ap Adam, "you can tell his lordship, in your next interview, that I hope to have the pleasure of bewitching him, and shall be glad to have a dance with him 'round about the cauldron stout.'"

Daisy laughed, but Michael looked grave. He little knew that there was secret intelligence between Ap Adam and his Daisy.

"Is it right to jest about the supernatural, master?" he

asked. "I think, father, if you have no objection, I might sometimes help poor old Madoc by playing for him at the Castle. Not for money, but for him," he added, flushing; for Michael had the family pride and independence.

The farmer's resolute negative was stayed by another jolt, and a resonant "Whoa! whoa!" from Big Ben. They had reached the top of the hill, and the remaining wheat-mows. The sheaves had been stacked as a safeguard against the weather; for, in the late hill-side harvest, they could rarely count upon carrying the wheat at any particular time, so it was put into small, pointed mows, grain inwards, for security. The harvesters were "waiting for the wagon," seated in a group on the hill-top. Below lay the peaceful farm; around, the sea. The heavens were aglow with the blue, purple, and gold of a glorious sunset, for a great globe of fire hung over the western ocean, about, as it would seem, to sink into it. Our friends paused a moment before setting to work, to gaze on the grandeur of the scene.

"Sustained by the Almighty's hand!" ejaculated old Mr. Pennant, removing his hat reverently, and pointing to the sun.

The wagon was quickly filled with the remaining sheaves, while many a gleaner started up to glean after them, as they were laid upon it. Women and children had already arms and aprons full. Daisy set to work with them, in spite of the silk gown.

"Better not, Miss, *fach;* you'll be spoiling it," remonstrated the women.

"It is well tucked-up," replied Daisy, filling the chubby hands of a four-year-old with corn-ears.

Gwylfa suddenly joined her and the little girl. He had been sleeping with the shepherd's dog, near a sort of improvised cradle, in which slumbered Aaron's youngest born.

The day's work was done just as the sun actually set, and the great hill-side wheatfield was cleared.

"Let us praise the Lord of the harvest," said the old farmer, as they stood all round about the wagon. "Parson, give out

the harvest-hymn. Eye of Day, pitch the tune. Then, my friends, all to the farm to supper."

Mr. Tudor recited a verse of a fine old Welsh psalm, and Daisy began to sing it. Simultaneously a volume of sweet, full sound filled the evening air, and mounted to the sky. A chorus of larks, hovering above—far, far out of sight—joined the melody, which seemed more of heaven than of earth.

"So shall we sing in the eternal city, my Daisy, when the last great harvest has been gathered in," whispered Michael; words which Daisy never forgot.

CHAPTER XVII.

PREACHING AT MONAD.

THE following Sunday afternoon the Earl and his son took a walk together along the shore, in the direction of Monad. They were discussing the light on the Esgair, a topic new to Lord Penruddock.

"I hope it may prevent the wrecks, whether it be by witchcraft or not," he said. "I wish every wrecker were in the place where they send their victims—that is, I suppose, the bottom of the sea."

"Then the best part of your income would cease," replied the Earl, grimly.

"I never thought of that. Do I live upon the ruin of my fellow-creatures?"

"You have the waifs and strays, as Lord of the Manor."

"I never saw one I coveted yet, except that pretty girl at Brynhafod. How lovely she is!"

The Earl's dark face grew darker, but he made no reply. They walked on in silence. The tide was low, and they picked their way through the patches of sand and shingle, until they reached the point of rock that protected the little bay of Monad, and within which the hamlet stood. As they were about to round it they were arrested by a full, clear voice. It seemed as if some one were singing a "hymn without words," that quiet Sabbath afternoon. Lord Penruddock fancied he had heard the voice before, and if so, it must have been at church that morning, whither he had gone, ostensibly to pray, really to look at Daisy. The family from the Castle rarely went to church, but were content with the one service in their private

chapel. The voice pierced the air alone for a few seconds, and was then joined by many others, so that a volume of sound arose, and reached the listeners.

"It is some canting Methodist preaching to the fishermen," said the Earl, glancing round the point.

Lord Penruddock looked also, and both paused in their walk to contemplate the scene before them. They were themselves hidden from observation by a huge boulder.

On the beach below the huts, standing near a large stone, was Daisy, surrounded by a score of ragged children, and Gwylfa at her side. At a little distance was Michael, also the centre of a group of men and women. They had books in their hands, and were leading the hymn, which the small and motley congregation followed. One or two sailors were lounging about, quietly smoking their pipes, and listening, while a few old people sat at the doors of the huts. The landlady of the beershop, her arms akimbo, her face defiant, also filled her doorway. It was a fresh, grey October day, and the small rocky amphitheatre was colourless as the whitewashed walls of a church. Here and there, however, the reddening ferns and lichens gave it life and light; as did the landlady's red shawl to the brown huts, and Daisy's scarlet cloak to the shingly beach. The sea in front was greenish-grey, and its white ripples, like so many flounces, served to break, but not disturb, its monotony. The scene was essentially peaceful; and even the Earl seemed arrested by it for the moment. His son was apparently spell-bound, and gazed so earnestly on Daisy that he proposed taking a path over the cliffs, instead of past Monad.

"I should like to hear what they have to say to these outlaws," returned Lord Penruddock, "and will join you afterwards."

But this did not suit the Earl, who, although he never contradicted his son—never refused him anything—occasionally circumvented him in secret.

"We can pass through them," he said.

But this was contrary to his son's views.

"They will disperse at once, and the preacher and teacher will be too terrified to proceed," he remarked. "We will stop here."

So they remained, concealed by the rock.

Michael was stationed near enough to their standpoint to be heard with tolerable distinctness. Daisy and her class were inaudible from distance, so that, when the hymn ceased, it was the discourse of the former that reached them while Lord Penruddock's eyes were riveted on the latter. She seated herself on her stone, and began to teach the children to read; while Michael, a Bible in his hand, read and explained verse by verse a portion of the Sermon on the Mount. Both he and his parents had sometimes wished that he should be a clergyman, but delicate health and his love of farming, combined, had prevented it. Perhaps, also, in his strange unselfishness of nature, he had given place to his brother, for they had settled between them that both could not possibly leave home, and he knew that Caradoc's soul had soared beyond the wheatfield. Still he was a preacher, not only by the innocence and purity of his daily life, but by the Spirit of God.

Sometimes, therefore, when Mr. Tudor was engaged elsewhere, he would boldly speak to the godless people of Monad, who had been, as he expressed it to Daisy, "on his heart from his childhood." And thus he had paved the way for her. She offered to teach the children, and was somewhat ungraciously permitted. They had not long begun the work, and were, therefore, comparatively new to it; but Daisy was feeling her way towards inviting her class to their old schoolroom, when the winter came.

As Michael expounded the portion he had chosen of the 6th chapter of St. Matthew, to the best of his ability, his voice rose with his subject, and his manner became animated. His hearers made their remarks and interjections as he proceeded, without respect either to person or text.

"Haven't got no treasure to lay up; the Earl gets all the

treasure," grumbled a sailor, removing his pipe from his mouth. "The Tower and Castle are full enough, I'll be bound."

This man was sitting on a piece of rock, between the Earl and the preacher, so that this unpalatable truth reached the present and future lords of the soil.

"We must fix our hearts on the Lord, and not on the world, then we shall find the treasure we want to lay up, in Heaven, where no thief will break through to steal it," explained Michael. "Of what use to gain the whole world if we lose our own souls?"

"Don't know anything of heaven or souls," grumbled a bystander; "but I should like plenty of money."

"Listen to this: 'Ye cannot serve God and Mammon,' or the devil, or riches," continued Michael. "Choose this day, this very Sunday, which you will serve."

"Not the Earl," growled a voice somewhere.

"Oh! make choice of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has preached this sermon for you, and died for you," pleaded Michael.

"Come away," said the Earl to his son, in a savage voice, taking him by the arm.

"No; I will understand what the impudent curs mean," replied Lord Penruddock, breaking from his father, and scrambling over the nearest piece of rock.

He was instantly in the midst of the congregation. Michael's words were arrested on his lips. Daisy's book fell; and the people stared, half in surprise, half in fright.

"What do you all mean by preaching and speaking against the Earl of Craigavon?" cried Lord Penruddock, hotly, facing Michael and the man lounging against the rock near him. "How dare you farmers, fishermen, and wreckers befoul his lordship's name!"

"Wreckers!" growled Davy Jones. "Who says we're wreckers? Prove it, my young lord."

"Everybody knows it; and were I Earl of Craigavon I would banish you from the land."

"There are two to that bargain, my lord. We're safe enough while we get the blame and the Earl the profit."

"Hush! Davy, hush!" sounded on all sides; and "Hush! my lord!" was whispered into Lord Penruddock's ear.

The whisperer was Evan the Tower, who had limped forth from the little crowd. He had been slightly lame ever since the accident at Careg Mawr.

"Scoundrel! unsay your vile words!" cried Lord Penruddock, past himself already, and nearing Davy Jones, who looked wicked enough for anything.

"I only said as the Earl is Lord of the Manor, and gets the booty; and you said as we were lords of the manor, and got it," he growled, impudently.

Lord Penruddock's hand was raised to give the man a blow, when it was suddenly stayed by a word and touch.

"Remember the day, my lord," said Michael; while Daisy who had joined the group, grasped the arm.

Lord Penruddock turned fiercely, and met her reproachful, terrified glance. His arm fell. There was a momentary pause, and the people slunk away to the huts by twos and threes; all except Davy, Evan, and a man or so who lingered at a distance.

"We are teaching them the Gospel, my lord," said Daisy, fearlessly meeting his eyes. "Michael was preaching from the Saviour's own sermon. He said nothing to offend."

Lord Penruddock turned towards her.

"Why are you alone amid such ruffians?" he asked.

"I am with my brother," she replied, pointing to Michael.

"Go, Davy, go round the point," urged Michael and Evan, while this was passing.

Davy moved sulkily away, backing towards the spot indicated; then, scrambling over the stone, recently surmounted by Lord Penruddock, found himself face to face with the Earl, who had been listening to all that had passed. Countenances sometimes speak more distinctly than words. It was so with these two men. They glanced at one another, but neither spoke. The fisherman touched his hat by a natural impulse,

while he looked dogged and wicked. The Earl sought his usual refuge, and cast his eyes on the ground. When he raised them the man was gone.

"He has escaped, has he?" said Lord Penruddock. "He may thank you, Miss Pennant, that he got off whole of limb. What did the fellow mean?"

"It is only his way, my lord," said Evan the Tower.

"He knows no better," said Michael Pennant.

"How long have you turned preacher?" asked his lordship, scornfully.

"Only a few months, my lord," replied Michael quietly, moving to Daisy's side. "We can do no more to-day, Daisy; perhaps we had better go home," he added.

"Stay a moment. Do you practise what you preach? Have you forgiven me for trying to throw you over the cliff?" asked Penruddock.

"I had forgotten it, my lord," returned Michael, simply.

"But I have not, nor the eagle's nest, nor the tower."

Further confessions were prevented by the sudden appearance of the Earl, waiting at a little distance.

"When are you coming again to see my sister? She tells me you are going to London with her," said Lord Penruddock, hastily, to Daisy.

"I think not, my lord," she answered; while Michael looked suspiciously at the young man.

"Penruddock!" shouted the Earl.

"I have dispersed your ruffianly congregation, and must now leave your conventicle myself," said Lord Penruddock, whose manners and moods were as changeable as the waves before him. "Good day, Pennant. *Au revoir, la Marguérite.*"

Michael lifted his hat, and Daisy curtsied, while the bloom heightened on her fair cheek.

"I'm glad he has gone. Come into the cottages," said Michael.

"Yet is he kind and comely," remarked Daisy, glancing after the easy, careless figure.

"Evan!" shouted the Earl, when Lord Penruddock turned his back on Daisy.

Terrified Evan limped towards him.

"See that these gatherings cease, and keep your eye on Davy Jones," were the orders he received.

"Yes, my lord," was his submissive response.

"Why should they cease, father?" asked Lord Penruddock, as Evan disappeared. "I heard nothing but religious twaddle, rather likely to improve the natives than not. Those pig-headed Pennants mean well, but not so the villainous people of Monad. They would as soon murder you or me as a half-drowned man."

The Earl started, and turned even paler than usual. Though tyrannical, he was not brave, and the idea of death, whether by natural or violent means, was not pleasant to him.

"Murder!" he muttered, and quickened his pace, as if the avenger were already at his back.

His son laughed reassuringly, and took his arm within his. The Earl glanced round; then, with his eyes on the ground, whispered slowly the words—

"For God's sake don't speak to me of murder, Edward!"

"Then let us talk of love," responded the son, lightly. "Is not Mona better already?—has not the presence of Everard worked wonders? I am the best doctor, after all."

"Everard—Everard," muttered the father. "He is penniless, poorer than—than we are. Surely he is not bold enough to think of Mona. My daughter! your sister!"

"You can manage to set them up in life, father. Love in a cottage is better than hate in a palace. He is a good fellow, a soldier, handsome, accomplished, and——"

"A spendthrift," supplied the gloomy Earl.

"Better spend than hoard," said his son, to which came no reply.

The silence that ensued was broken by an exclamation from Lord Penruddock.

"There she is! What a dainty little figure!"

The Earl looked back, and saw Michael and Daisy scrambling up a rough cliff-path outside the Monad inclosure.

"I am sure she must be a lady," he continued. "She has the movements, manners, voice of a gentlewoman. Even in that costume it is unmistakable. I suppose her friends were lost in the wreck."

"What can it signify to you?" asked the Earl.

"Love in a farm, perhaps, father; who can tell?" was the careless rejoinder.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CHRISTMAS AND CARAD.

"CHRISTMAS comes but once a year," was a favourite aphorism of old Mr. Pennant's. Indeed, all his family used it and acted upon it. When Christmas did come they kept it royally, giving both to the poor and to the Lord, and fostering old customs abroad and at home.

On Christmas Eve, therefore, every one was astir at the farm. Mrs. Pennant and Daisy made plum-puddings and mince pies enough for a score of farms; while the customary boar's head and beef, faggots and logs, mistletoe and evergreens, were hauled in.

When the evening really arrived, and the preparations were completed, the family assembled in the hall, while the farm labourers were invited to a preparatory supper in the kitchen. A huge fire blazed in both chimneys, sending up flames that would have set fire to less substantial and roomy compartments, but that only served, as was their duty, to warm and enliven the rooms and their inmates. The walls and windows were ornamented with holly and evergreens, and in the latter strange devices appeared. Daisy had formed leafy stars in the quaint panes with much trouble, through the points of which an inquisitive December moon peeped; the curtains were still undrawn, so that the Frost King also looked in, and a bright, happy scene they witnessed.

Daisy was chasing old Farmer Pennant round and round the "mistletoe bough" that hung in the middle of the hall. She declared that he should be the first to be kissed beneath its berries, and he playfully eluded her. Michael was aiding her

in her efforts to entrap him, while his father, from his seat on the settle, caught him by the coat-tails, or Daisy by the gown, whenever they chanced to be near enough. Mrs. Pennant dozed as usual over her knitting on one side of the chimney-corner, and Ap Adam pored over a book in the firelight, to the danger of his eyesight, in the other.

Daisy caught the old man at last, right under the mistletoe, and jumped upon his neck.

"I have you, grandfather!" she cried, and a loving kiss sounded.

At the same moment some one quietly opened the front door and stepped from the passage into the hall, where he stood a moment, unobserved. He was a fine, dark, handsome man, with a countenance so remarkable for variety of expression that, even during the few moments he remained unnoticed, it changed frequently. As he glanced round the room there was a tender, almost tearful, light in his eyes, and when they fell on the pair beneath the mistletoe, the whole face kindled into a smile, sweet and joyous as spring sunshine.

"Now it is thy turn, Michael," said old Mr. Pennant, releasing Daisy.

Michael stood irresolute, and Daisy made believe to run away. They were as brother and sister, and the mistletoe kiss quite natural to both. But as she turned, in her mirthful shamming, she nearly ran into the stranger's arms. Starting back, she looked at him a moment, while he gazed at her, half pleased, half pained, for she seemed to withdraw as from a really unknown person.

"Carad! father! mother! It is Carad!" she cried, and ran, in her eagerness, to arouse Mrs. Pennant.

It was Caradoc; and in less time than it takes to tell he was surrounded by his family. He had not been home for nearly three years; a journey to and from London in those days being lengthy and expensive. His mother clung to him, shedding tears of joy; the men wrung his hand; but Daisy, where was she? She stood apart, looking on, big dew-drops in the

violets. Carad, her hero, her knight, her king, had come home, and she had no word to say. But he spoke for her, at last, holding out both hands.

Is it really Daisy?" he asked, smiling half incredulously.

She gave him hers, and her eyes drooped as she did so.

Michael, watching her, saw it, and wondered why she blushed, and why Carad did not embrace her. But speculations ceased in the joy of reunion, and he forgot that his brother had left Daisy a child and found her a woman. Daisy, who had the rare gifts of self-possession and unselfishness combined, ran to the kitchen with the good news. Marget was in the hall immediately, with her arms unceremoniously round Caradoc, and the words, "Name o' goodness, how big he's grown!" on her lips.

"Well, there's enough of him," remarked his father.

"Come, all of you, and see him," said Daisy, and returned to her friends, followed by a troop of ploughmen, ploughboys, shepherds, and their families.

Caradoc had enough to do to shake hands with them all, and receive their delighted congratulations on his return.

"He's as fine a gentleman as my Lord Penruddock," whispered one.

"And a deal finer. He's bigger and taller," another.

"He'd be making a grand lord," a third.

"They're telling me as it was Pennant, Craigavon Castle, once upon a time, not Penruddock," a fourth.

"If it was now, things would be different," a fifth.

These and the like remarks were continued in the farm-kitchen after the kindly people left the hall: and, certainly, if a goodly presence is a type of nobility and ancient lineage, Caradoc must have had good blood in his veins. And so he had. Not only the crimson streams that had their source in some ancient knight of King Arthur's court, but the still purer and brighter of God-fearing, honest forefathers.

As he stood between two of these, a watery mist in his thoughtful eyes, surrounded by the peasants, who had been

born, bred, and nurtured on their farm, it would have been difficult to find three finer specimens of the yeoman descended from the noble; for it may be well to repeat, a Pennant was actually Lord of Craigavon before the Norman got possession of it. Tradition and a long roll of parchment containing one of those pedigrees, concerning which it has been the fashion to jibe the Welsh, attested this fact. The Welsh in those days were even prouder than in these of being genuine, unadulterated Britons; and had not yet forgiven their Saxon and Norman conquerors.

"Go you away, and let the poor boy warm himself," said Marget, authoritatively, to her friends. "Ach! but he is cold. Warm you him some ale, Miss Daisy, while I go and make some buttered toast."

"Swimming in butter, Marget—you remember?" laughed Caradoc. "A cup of tea, if I may be so extravagant, Daisy."

Marget nodded, and disappeared with the rest, while Daisy and Mrs. Pennant began to spread the board.

"I will do it, mother. Go and sit down by Carad," said Daisy; and Mrs. Pennant, obedient still, took her old place.

"Let me sit by you once more, mother *fach*," said Caradoc. "Michael, come here. We are almost too big for the three-legged stools now."

They all gathered into the chimney-corner round the fire, while Daisy moved from cupboard to table, and kitchen to hall, and noiselessly prepared the general supper, while Caradoc's especial tea was brewing.

"You are come home for good now, Carad," said Mrs. Pennant, her eyes brimful of tears.

"If you wish it, mother. But we will talk of that another time."

"I suppose you are equal to killing and curing all the parish by this time," said his father. "You'll have to begin with Michael."

Caradoc put his arm round his brother in the old way, and looked into his face. Letters had rarely passed between them,

and he had heard little of the family health. Correspondence was, like travelling, slow and expensive, when there were neither railroads nor penny posts, and people only wrote when they had something important to communicate. He had, therefore, much to learn and all to tell.

"I have had good experience, father, both in the hospitals, and as assistant to Dr. Moore," he said. "I will, as you suggest, practise a little upon Michael, until I get a reputation."

"Bleed, leech, and blister him, I suppose," put in Ap Adam. "No good to be before one's age."

"You exposed that system to me, Master, and I have had battles enough about it," replied Caradoc. "But I think light is dawning, and Nature will conquer at last. If you will join partnership, we should help her on."

"Too late. Besides, I'm only a quack. How is old Moore!"

"Well; and asks me to be his partner."

"Then God be praised, thou hast been a good lad!" said the old farmer, fervently.

Daisy planted herself behind his chair, and stood there a moment to listen. The eyes of both brothers were fixed upon her, and she met Caradoc's frankly, yet not without a blush.

"Surely it cannot be Daisy!" he repeated, dreamily.

"But who else should it be, my dear?" said Mrs. Pennant, half offended at the doubt. "Whom did you expect here except Daisy? I'm sure I want no other? She's been a blessed daughter to me."

"And to us all. She is ever our Eye of Day," said the old man, putting his arm round her.

"It is to be hoped that you won't help to spoil her, Carad," said the farmer. "She is the vainest puss in the county."

The conversation was interrupted, much to Daisy's comfort, by the entrance of Gwylfa, who usually walked in about supper-time, from his evening visit to the beach. He was a methodical dog, and punctual to meals as to duty. He took

a survey of the party round the fire, and saw Caradoc. Only those who have witnessed a dog's joy at meeting a friend after long separation could understand how, old though he was, he leapt from the ground, gave a bark that sounded almost a human cry of eager delight, and jumped upon his old master. His fore-legs round his neck, his tongue to his face, his brown eyes beaming with love, he hugged his friend; while Caradoc, quite overcome, put his arms round his damp, shaggy coat, and half-whispered, "I was looking for thee, old friend."

The family group was now complete, and the Christmas Eve perfect.

Marget came in with a dish of fried eggs and bacon, and the circle was broken only to form a fresh one round the supper-table.

"May I pour out his tea, mother?" asked Daisy.

"She wants to show off the fashionable ways she has learnt at the Castle," said David Pennant. "Look at her, Carad. That's how my Lady Mona holds the tea-pot. This new-fashioned tea is only cat-lap. Better stick to the wholesome home-brewed."

But Daisy only laughed. She was used to the farmer's jests; and Carad glanced at the graceful head as it bent over the tiny cup and saucer.

He had enough to do to answer questions, not only concerning himself, but London, where no one else present had ever been, except, perhaps, Ap Adam. That gentleman was more greedy of news than the others, and made so many inquiries that Marget rebuked him with, "Let the lad eat his supper, Master. You keep his mouth open, but won't let him put anything into it."

"It's big enough, anyhow," said the farmer.

"I'm sure, David, he's got a very pretty mouth: he always had," interfered Mrs. Pennant.

"Your geese were always swans, mother," returned her husband.

There was a general laugh; while everybody professed to

look inquisitively at Caradoc's mouth—visible, because clean shaven.

"Stay with Carad, dear mother. I will see to everything," whispered Daisy, when supper was over; and she slipped away.

"I cannot yet believe in her, mother," said Caradoc, smiling and laying his hand on Mrs. Pennant's. "She is so much taller than I expected. And she is grown into such a lady!"

"She was always tall and lady enough for us, my dear," rejoined his mother, who was easy, and content with things as they were, wanting no change. "I hope you won't put London notions into her head. There's Lady Mona who has been doing that already."

"That I certainly shall not. A daisy is lovely in the meadow, but lost or soiled in the street," replied Caradoc, tenderness in his voice.

"Well said, my ex-scholar!" cried Ap Adam.

Meanwhile Daisy was in Caradoc's room, arranging and rearranging it. She had already placed holly and evergreens there, and the bed was always prepared. She took a Bible and hymn-book from the shelf and put them on his table; then she dusted his books and curiosities for the hundredth time. While she was thus occupied, Marget came in with the time-honoured warming-pan, and carefully passed it over every inch of the snow-white linen.

"Mother airs it almost every day," said Daisy, smiling. "At any rate it can't be frost-bitten."

"I daresay they haven't no warming-pans in London," remarked Marget, rubbing away with satisfaction.

"Do you think there is anything else, Marget?" asked Daisy, glancing round.

Marget set her arms akimbo, and looked also.

"Well, no. I must say it is as tidy as a new-washen dish," was the reply. "Now go you down to the kitchen, for they're expecting you; and Michael's like a hen with one chick when you're away."

Daisy found all her friends assembled there. The farm people were drinking Caradoc's health in Welsh ale, and the rafters, with their goodly show of sides of bacon, hams, dried herbs, and ropes of onions, shook at their cheering. She stood by Michael's side, while Caradoc returned thanks heartily, and wished everybody a merry Christmas. The chimney-corner was full of old people, who were rejoicing in the warmth after supper, and he was standing amongst them. He certainly deserved, personally at least, the praises they bestowed upon him; for he was as good-looking a young man, and as kindly-mannered, as any in the county. So also thought Daisy, as she watched him.

"You said you would not be alive when I came back, Shanno," he remarked to an old woman. "But here I am; and, indeed, there's no place in the world like home."

"Thank God that my eyes are spared me to see you again, Carad, *bach!* I'm turned my fourscore and nineteen. I'm in my hundred," she replied.

"And I am over fourscore, Shanno," broke in old Mr. Pennant. "Let us return thanks to our Father in heaven for His mercies to us, His undeserving children."

The word went round, and all present knelt down, while the head of the family and the farm thanked the Giver of all good for the return of his grandson, and for the manifold mercies vouchsafed to every individual, not only in this life, but in the prospect of a still better life, through the atonement and longsuffering of His beloved Son, whose birth into the world they hoped to celebrate on the morrow. When they rose from their knees, they all sang a Christmas carol, which Daisy led.

"Now we must separate, if we wish to be at the Plygain to-morrow morning," said David Pennant, with his jovial heartiness. "Carad, what do you think about it? I wager you and the Master will be snoring while we are at church."

"I hope not, father. I think I had Plygain on my heart every Christmas Day in London; for I could not sleep after

four, and used to get up, light a taper, and think of you all at home."

"And of the angels and the blessed birth, I hope, my boy," replied his father.

Carad bowed his head.

"He is speaking Welsh just as well as ever," remarked an old man. "They are not speaking it in London, I suppose, Master Carad?"

"No, Shonny. They disdain our ancient tongue, and laugh at what they call my brogue."

"Then," remarked Ap Adam, in English, "they fail to say, with the gallant Mortimer,

> 'For thy tongue
> Makes Welsh as sweet as ditties highly penned,
> Sung by a fair queen in a summer's bower,
> With ravishing division to her lute.'"

"They rather mimic my initial consonants, and call me Fluellen. But I maintain that Shakespeare did not thoroughly understand Welshy English," replied Caradoc.

"Have you seen a tragedy of Shakespeare's acted?" asked Daisy enthusiastically, suddenly facing Caradoc, and fixing her eyes on his.

"I have, Daisy. I have seen 'Hamlet.'"

"I wish I had been there!" cried Daisy.

"You three must keep your Saesoneg for the quality, and speak plain Cwmraeg to us poor folk," said David Pennant.

"And, Carad, my dear, you must have some hot posset before you go to bed, for fear you should take cold," spake Mrs. Pennant, with maternal instinct.

Both orders were obeyed, after which Caradoc went to his room, and saw, with wondering gratitude, how carefully it had been tended, and how well the treasures he had gathered from boyhood up had been kept. Something like tears filled his eyes as he murmured, his hand resting on the Book of Life, "No: I must not—I cannot leave them again. The world has nothing to offer so pure and sweet as home."

CHAPTER XIX.

CHRISTMAS MORN.

PLYGAIN—*anglicé*, the time of night when the cock croweth, the morning twilight, the dawn—was, as the early service on Christmas morning, religiously kept, not only by the inmates of Brynhafod, but by their neighbours. At about five o'clock, therefore, on the day blest above all others to our fallen race, Mr. Pennant, his family and servants, set out for church, carrying lighted torches in their hands. The moon had disappeared, but had left many of her attendant stars behind, so that lights were not wanting, either above or below, to herald in the morn. The earth was white with hoar-frost, which sparkled in the torchlight like many-hued gems; while the grey cloak of overhanging twilight veiled them when the gleam was gone.

As the little procession wended through farmstead, mountain-road, and downs, it was increased from the huts round about, and formed a strange mass of moving light. Each member of it bore either torch or lantern, and the lights must, from a distance, have appeared like so many jack-o'-lanterns. Mists and darkness hung over the sea, and the land was asleep. It was awakened, however, by the joyous sound of hymns. Our friends sang as they walked or stumbled along, and Daisy's clear treble surmounted the chorus. She was at the side of the old farmer; now staying him; now supported by him. Caradoc was on his other side, watching lest he should trip; but not venturing to offer aid, for he saw that his grandfather was hale as himself, in spite of his fourscore years. David Pennant and his wife were arm-in-arm; Ap Adam had taken

Michael's arm on account of his near sight, and so they walked cheerfully on, singing Christmas carols. It might almost be said that "the hills shouted for joy," since echoes rang on all sides, and thus the "glad tidings" were borne over land and sea.

When they reached the church they found it a bower of evergreens and a blaze of light. They were among the first to arrive, and the few who were there before them met them in the porch.

"We promised to come, Master Michael," growled a voice and to the unspeakable joy of the young lay-preacher, Davy Jones, the fisherman, slunk into the church. He was accompanied by several others of the Monad people, and some of Daisy's children. Were these the firstfruits of their joint labours?

The old church looked almost young, and the quaint antique monuments, carved wood screen, and faded mural paintings, stood clearly out beneath the many-coloured tapers and candles, and boughs of holly and evergreens that illuminated and ornamented it.

"I wonder whether the fairies really do take refuge from the cold amongst the leaves?" whispered Daisy, as she entered.

"One fairy does, at least," thought Caradoc.

The large, square, wormeaten Brynhafod pew was in the chancel, opposite the still larger one belonging to the Castle. The latter was hung with faded crimson curtains, and backed and surmounted with monuments, and coats of arms, so old that even Ap Adam could not date them. He had, however, deciphered the name of Pennant in more than one nearly obliterated British inscription, which proved, to his satisfaction at least, that the church had originally been built before Rome laid her finger on Britain, and that the Pennants had actually ruled before the present family, originally Mortdevilles, got possession of Craigavon.

But this has nothing to do with the Plygain.

The family from the farm filled their pew, and were thankful to be all at church together once more.

In the churchyard, just outside the window near the pew, were the graves of the children who had gone home before them; and of whom Mrs. Pennant thought tenderly as she knelt to pray for those who remained, amongst whom she counted Daisy as one.

Daisy, seated between the old man and Michael, found her prayers much disturbed by the effect of the church. She had striven against this distraction every year since her childhood; and still the green branches with their red berries, the manifold tapers that threatened to set fire to them, and especially the arbour in which she herself sat, attracted her from her devotions. She was glad when Mr. Tudor and the clerk appeared to take possession of their "bushes," as she mentally called their desks, and began the service.

The church was full, and the congregation hearty; for they liked this old custom, handed down to them from a St. Iltyd, or a St. David, or, maybe, some holy man of earlier existence still. The women, whether belonging to the farm or cottage, all wore the Welsh costume, and the only distinction between their head-gear and the men's was the full-bordered and be-ribboned lace cap.

The service began with a Christmas hymn. Men, women, and children joined, and a volume of praise ascended to heaven.

Towards the conclusion the voices quailed slightly; for an unexpected event attracted general attention. Two gentlemen walked quietly up the aisle, and disappeared in the Castle pew. This, although untenanted, corresponded in adornment to that of Brynhafod, and the curtains had been partially undrawn to allow the lights to be kindled, which were stuck, like the bunches of evergreens, into the pews. The Pennants glanced up a moment, and saw that one of the gentlemen was Lord Penruddock, the other a grey-headed man of middle age, whom none of them knew even by sight. They never remembered to have seen any member of the family of the Castle at the Plygain before. But they knew the reverence

due to Him they came to worship too well to speculate, so the strange fact was soon forgotten by all, except, perhaps, Caradoc.

Happily, Daisy, in her unconsciousness of her beauty, and above all, the simplicity of her life, would never have imagined that Lord Penruddock could come to church for any object but prayer, and so did not discover that he had really made the excuse of the old Welsh custom of Plygain to his companion, in order that he might see her. And he so planted himself between a bush and taper that he could look at her undisturbed.

His friend, on the contrary, stood erect in front of the seat, facing the Pennants. He was a fine, military-looking man, with a grey moustache—betokening the soldier,—and a tall, erect figure. He appeared reverent and attentive, although he occasionally glanced about him at what was evidently new and strange to him. He looked frequently into the Pennants' pew, as if attracted by the family it contained; and, as his eyes turned from one young person to the other, an expression of sadness passed into them. They rested at length, however, inquisitively on Ap Adam, who, thanks to his imperfect sight, was unconscious of his gaze. Not so Caradoc. He was uncomfortably aware that they were all objects of attention—not only to the stranger, but to Lord Penruddock,—and, as young men will, he more than once endeavoured to make them understand that he disapproved of their observation. When the elder gentleman caught his eye, he turned instantly to his book, which, being in Welsh, was probably as "Greek to him"; but Lord Penruddock returned his gaze haughtily, and continued to look at the unconscious Daisy.

She must have appeared, not only beautiful, but picturesque, to these men of the world, as she stood, flushed with exercise and health, in her country costume, now joining heartily in the responses, now in the singing. She came out like a picture from the strange framework of the leafy pew, and the lights flickered across her face, as if to make her brilliant and clear

complexion more remarkable than usual. But Caradoc saw that she did not even glance at Lord Penruddock, and was satisfied. Once he remarked that she looked at the stranger with curiosity and interest, but only once.

It will be evident that Caradoc was not as devout as his friends were. He was keen-witted and clear-sighted, and London had opened his understanding to many things which country philosophy might not have taught him. Whether he had passed through his ordeal scathless or not, he had gained experience, and was all the better fitted to cope with the world from the knowledge of life he had acquired. He could scarcely say, himself, whether he was happier from his enlarged views; but this he knew—that he wished them still farther widened. His mother, who stood beside him, placid as a purring cat, little knew that the sphere into which she sought to place him was already too narrow for him.

While we are making these irrelevant notes the holy Christmas service continues. "Unto us a child is born; unto us a son is given," has been read; the Song of the Angels chanted; the history of the human birth of the Son of God in a stable, and his cradling in a manger repeated; and the sermon begun. Irreverent gazing of individuals is at an end, for the congregation are seated, and hidden by the pews. Mr. Tudor preaches soundly and solemnly—for, although wanting in courage out of his pulpit, he is brave within it. All eyes turn towards him as, with the eloquence natural to his countrymen, he addresses his flock extempore on the subject of the Nativity, and entreats his hearers to love Him who so wonderfully showed His love to them.

By the time the sermon was ended the church was almost in darkness; for the candles and tapers had burnt down, and, in spite of various efforts quietly to kindle others, gloom prevailed. When the Pennants left their pew, Lord Penruddock opened his. The great folk usually waited until the congregation had filed out; but he and his companion mingled with them; that is to say, his lordship forced his way to Daisy's

side, and his friend to Ap Adam's. But Caradoc kept close to Daisy, and was first in the porch.

"Take my arm, Daisy," he whispered, and she did so, surprised, notwithstanding, by his abruptness.

A white, cold twilight enveloped the world, through which a lingering star or so still peeped. The late winter sun was thinking of making his appearance, but hills and mists concealed him as yet. Lanterns and torches were re-lighted by some of the people, while others preferred chancing the dawn.

"A merry Christmas, Miss Pennant," said Lord Penruddock in a low voice, as Caradoc and Daisy stepped out upon the path.

"Thank you, my lord; the same to you," she replied frankly, turning towards him, while Caradoc pinned her to his side.

"I came to church to see you," he continued, in a whisper, but not so low but that Caradoc heard.

"A cold, dark Christmas morning, my lord," said the latter aloud. "Can I be of service to your lordship?"

"Ah! Mr. Caradoc Pennant, I think," rejoined Lord Penruddock. "You and I have been long absent. When did you come back?"

"Only last night, my lord."

While this was passing in the semi-darkness, the rest of the Pennants were wishing and receiving the "compliments of the season," from neighbours and friends. Glad words and cheerful voices sounded on all sides. But where was the stranger? In the church still, his hand on Ap Adam's shoulder.

"Perceval! It must be you. I cannot be mistaken!" he said, eagerly.

Ap Adam turned and faced the speaker.

"My name is Ap Adam," he said, with his dry voice and manner.

"Ap Fiddlestick! Where are you staying?"

"Not where any visitor of Lord Craigavon's would care to see me. You have mistaken me for another."

"Pshaw! I remember you, though we have not met for twenty years."

The conversation was interrupted by a servant, who told the stranger that Lord Penruddock was waiting for him.

"We must meet again, Perceval; I have much to tell," he said, hastily, and followed the man to a carriage that was outside the churchyard gate.

Most of the congregation paused to see it drive off, and to watch the lamps disappear up the hill. When at last the Brynhafod party set out homewards, accompanied by many neighbours, Caradoc retained possession of Daisy, and they returned towards the farm in advance of the rest.

"How long have you known Lord Penruddock so intimately?" asked Caradoc, with a voice betokening annoyance.

"I do not know him at all; I only speak to him—or, rather he speaks to me," she replied.

"I thought you answered him readily enough, Daisy."

"I returned the compliments of the season, Carad."

"And that other compliment he whispered in your ear?"

"I was indifferent to it. The poets say the gallants have a way of making pretty speeches to women, and I suppose his lordship is a gallant."

Caradoc smiled, and pressed Daisy's arm involuntarily. He could not see the deep blush that overspread her face.

"But when and where did he first address you, Daisy?"

"At the Castle, on the day of his return. The Lady Mona had sent for me, and he came back unexpectedly. I have never been to the Castle since—I suppose because they have much grand company there. Old Madoc tells us that Lord Penruddock has brought numerous guests, and that Lady Mona is gay as a lark, while the Earl frowns more than ever."

"And starves the household, I'll be bound. But when next did you see your gallant, as you call his lordship?"

"How inquisitive you are, Carad! I see him so often that

I forget. Sometimes on the beach and the hill, at others when I am riding or driving to market on Saturday. Then he is usually on horseback, where, I think, he looks the comeliest."

"Do you tell him so, or does he tell you how comely you look? I remember what a wild rider you always were, Daisy."

"You taught me, Carad. Of course I do not remark on my lord's carriage or person, although he usually makes me some fine compliment. Do all the town sparks speak so politely?"

"I suppose so. You have studied the poets to some purpose, Daisy, for you use their language. What does my lord say?"

"I forget, for he does not speak the truth. I sometimes tremble lest he should meet me yonder, near the Esgair."

Caradoc looked towards the far-stretching point, but the light was not visible from behind.

"Why do you fear that spot particularly?" he asked.

"Because I only go there when I tend the fire. The place has an evil name."

"You!—surely you never light the lantern, Daisy?"

"Sometimes, when the master is away, and occasionally when he is at home. I am afraid of his losing footing and falling into the sea. His sight gets worse, I think."

"You must not do it, Daisy. It is dangerous even for a man. How could they let you?"

"They? Who? No one knows but the master and me, and we cannot let the ships go down and not try to save them."

Caradoc felt Daisy tremble. She always shuddered at the thought of shipwreck.

"Dear child, how brave you are! Yet how sympathetic!" he said.

"Who is the gallant now, Mr. Carad?" she asked.

He did not answer, but he thought, rather sadly, of the many ties that drew him homeward. Not only his parents, but the beacon and Daisy demanded him. She needed a brother's protection from the doubtful attentions of Lord Penruddock.

Still she had Michael. But, he remembered suddenly, Michael might be more to her than a brother.

"Have you told Michael of the civilities of my Lord Penruddock?" he asked, pausing and dropping her arm for a moment.

"Wherefore? They would not interest him. He cares only for what is noble, truthful, and religious."

"My mother, then, or the master?"

"Mother only smiles, and looks pleased when I say what sugared and honeyed words I have heard, and I have not spoken of his lordship to the master."

While they stood in the grey dawn, on the downland beneath the mountain, the sun slowly rose behind it. His first golden ray fell on Daisy. It was no wonder that Caradoc looked at her astonished, and thought he had never seen any one so beautiful.

"Hush, Carad!" she whispered, her finger on her lip. "The angels are singing carols at the golden gates."

She looked and pointed upwards, as if she heard heavenly music. Then she smiled.

"Michael and I always think of the angels when the sun rises," she said. "Ah! here he is!"

"I thought I never should come up with you," said breathless Michael, joining them; and Caradoc left Daisy's arm to his brother, and walked by that brother's side.

"Feeding the poultry." [*Page* 141.

CHAPTER XX.

NOBLE VISITORS.

DAISY was feeding the poultry in the farm-yard the morning succeeding Christmas Day, when Lord Penruddock and the gentleman who had been at church with him appeared at the gate which led into the road. They stopped there to look at her. She was surrounded by turkeys, peafowl, barn-door cocks and hens, ducks, and geese. Some pigeons, and a few bold robins and sparrows strutted about on the outskirts of the group, and hungry crows and blackbirds hovered near. She held a basket on her arm and a dish in her hand, whence she took handfuls of corn, potatoes, or bread-crumbs, to scatter amongst the poultry at her feet, or throw broadcast to the more distant pensioners. Gwylfa sat at her side, watching her and her large family meditatively, and occasionally barking or growling at some audacious fowl, reproved for greediness by his young mistress. One gobbling turkey-cock, with outspread tail, seemed particularly aggressive, and was frequently repulsed; but only to come foward again with renewed impudence.

"You are the most forward bird in the poultry-yard," said Daisy, with a majestic wave of the hand and toss of the head. "I shall call you my Lord Penruddock."

She was without hat and shawl in spite of the hard frost, and health and joy shone in her face and eyes. Signs of peace and plenty surrounded her. Well-thatched corn-stacks and hayricks stood on one side; barns, whence sounded the flail of the thresher, on the other; in front, a dovecote; behind, the back of the ivy-clad farm. The yard was large and clean, with space

for milking many cows, and milk-pails and three-legged milking-stools were drying against the walls. The scene was essentially picturesque, and Daisy's figure its happy frontispiece.

The stranger was so much engrossed by it that he scarcely heard Lord Penruddock say that they would cross the farm-yard instead of going to the front. They did so, and unexpectedly intruded on Daisy.

"Why will you call that great brute Penruddock?" asked his lordship.

"Because he is so bold, my lord," replied Daisy, curtseying to the stranger as he lifted his hat to her, and, smiling at her answer, asked to be introduced.

"Miss Pennant; Sir George Walpole," said Lord Penruddock, curtly.

Daisy had only once before in her short life been introduced formally, and that was to Lord Penruddock himself. On that occasion she believed that she had made, as she expressed it, a milk-maid curtsey; on this, she scarcely knew why, she was impelled to hold out her hand. Sir George Walpole was middle-aged, and had such grave grey eyes, and such a sad smile, that her heart warmed towards him. After she had committed this breach of breeding, and he had shaken the hand cordially, her face flushed all over. An expression of admiration and interest passed over his features as he looked at her.

"You never shook hands with me in your life," said Lord Penruddock, reproachfully.

"No, my lord, never," replied Daisy, gravely.

"He is too bold," said Sir George, smiling quietly. "But we are intruding on your work," he continued. "I took the liberty of calling to inquire for an old friend. Is Mr. Perceval —or Mr. Ap Adam—at home?"

"I think not, sir; but I will see," replied Daisy; then added, "Will you kindly go round to the front, my lord, and I will inquire meanwhile?"

"May we not follow you through the back?" asked his

lordship; but Sir George Walpole moved away, and he turned also.

Daisy quietly scattered the remaining food amongst her poultry, smoothed her dress, and went into the house, attended by Gwylfa, who had eyed the interlopers suspiciously during their stay in the yard. She walked through the passage to the hall, where she had left Mrs. Pennant and Caradoc a short time before. She told them of the visitors, and their knock sounded before she had finished. Mrs. Pennant bustled to the door, and they were in the hall at once.

"There is no fire in the parlour, my lord, and it is too cold to stand outside," she said, in Welsh. "You will excuse our being untidy."

Caradoc, who had been reading near the fire, stood, his book in his hand. He mistrusted Lord Penruddock, and was looking at Daisy to see how she took his visit. She was at his side, informing him that the other gentleman looked like a warrior in an old ballad.

"I have nearly forgotten my Welsh, Mrs. Pennant," said Lord Penruddock, as he entered; "and my friend knows none. But here are your son and Miss Pennant, who can interpret for us."

He looked at Caradoc, who bowed stiffly. They met as strangers, for their intercourse, such as it was, had been scarcely renewed since their boyhood. Sir George Walpole, however, at once addressed Caradoc.

"You can give me the information I seek, sir. May I sit down in this warm corner, for I feel the cold much?"

He took Mrs. Pennant's chair: Caradoc a corner of the settle; while Lord Penruddock talked to Mrs. Pennant in indifferent Welsh, and to Daisy in English.

"I understand that a gentleman who calls himself Ap Adam resides here," began Sir George. "Can I see him?"

"He left early this morning, and told me that we were not to expect him back to-day," replied Caradoc.

"Provoking! I am positive that he is an old friend of

mine, whom I have not met for twenty years or more. Did he never call himself Perceval?"

"He has been here and in the neighbourhood fourteen years, and has been always known as Mr. Ap Adam. He has lived with us, nominally, at least twelve years."

"What occupation does he follow?"

"He was so good as to teach my brother, sister, and myself, as long as we went to school; now he is engaged in antiquarian research."

"Strange! You are sure his name is not Perceval?"

"Certain. It is Ap Adam. He is Welsh, and a clever linguist."

"Perceval was apt at languages also. When he comes back would you ask him to call on me at Craigavon Castle?"

"He never goes there, sir; and I do not think he would call."

"Then ask him to write. Or will you write to me when he returns, and I will come and see him here, with your permission?"

"He may not be back for weeks. We never know when to expect him or where he goes."

"Then write to me in London. There is my card. Have you ever been in Town?"

"I have just left it; and shortly before I left I think I had the honour of seeing you, sir. I was assistant to Dr. Moore, when you consulted him, and he was good enough to give me the opportunity of seeing the illustrious Sir George Walpole. It was but a glance, so I did not recognise you yesterday."

Caradoc bent his head respectfully, and the elder man acknowledged it with the sad smile peculiar to him.

"Ah! They made too much fuss about me. I only did my duty, and if I faced death it was because I did not greatly care for life. When you come to Town again you must pay me a visit. What do you say to an army surgeonship? You might make your fortune abroad with your face and figure."

"I have promised my mother to settle at home, sir; otherwise I should like to see more of the world."

"That seems a pity. Is it not to throw yourself away? though, doubtless, you may be happier in this quiet spot than in a more enlarged sphere. Of course you know the Earl of Craigavon?"

"As his tenants—nothing more. My family have rented this farm for centuries."

"But—— you are people of education. Excuse me; I mean no insult to the yeoman, only you and your sister seem——; well, you understand what I mean—not exactly country-bred."

"We owe our education to Mr. Ap Adam, sir. He is unquestionably a gentleman."

There was a slight asperity in Caradoc's tone as he said this, which Sir George Walpole understood.

"And he, or Nature, or honest parents, have managed to make a gentleman of you also, my young friend," he said rising; "and a gentlewoman of your sister," he added, looking towards Daisy, who was replying to some question of Lord Penruddock's with that sort of dignified respect that kept him at a distance. "I shall expect to hear from you when Perceval, or Ap Adam, as may be, returns. Now, Penruddock, if you can tear yourself from the meshes of agreeable conversation, I——"

The rest of the sentence was interrupted by the entrance of the two Mr. Pennants and Michael."

"Glad to see you here, my lord," said the old farmer. "It is a good omen when landlords and tenants meet in the farmsteads. And you will one day be my grandson's landlord, if not ours."

"We shall never agree. We are already too much set up," replied Lord Penruddock, glancing at Caradoc, who was naming Sir George Walpole to his father.

"This is indeed an honour, sir," said David Pennant, bowing low. "Even here, in this remote place, we have heard of the fame of the great General Walpole."

Caradoc translated his words, and Daisy, escaping from Lord Penruddock, went to his side. Sir George glanced from her to her reputed parents—the dark, good-looking farmer, and his placid, round-faced help-mate.

"Are you the celebrated general of whom the Master read and spoke, sir?" she asked, eagerly, "who saved the poor natives from famine at the siege, and ordered the massacre to cease, and ended the dreadful war?"

"Is 'the Master' Ap Adam? and did he say he knew me?" asked Sir George, his eyes on the fair, animated face.

"Yes, sir; but though he shed tears at the wonderful and stirring account, he did not say he knew you. Indeed, I do not think he does, or he must have told us: he would have felt so proud."

"And I have never before felt so proud as now," returned Sir George, glancing at the group who surrounded him; for all the little party were now gathered about him. "To save life and be thus welcomed is some compensation for labour and sorrow."

"Oh, sir! you who have done such good must be happy!" said Daisy, impulsively.

"And surely the blessing of Him who 'willeth not that one of His little ones should perish' will be yours!" exclaimed the old farmer, as Caradoc rapidly translated what passed.

Sir George held out his hand to the old man, who grasped it in his horny palm; after which David offered his, with the instinct that makes an honest man long to claim brotherhood with the great and good.

"And Michael, sir, who read of the poor women and children in the war and scarceness, till he could read no longer for the tears," said Daisy, her own eyes glistening with the moisture of feeling.

"Another brother?" asked Sir George, as Daisy touched Michael, who was standing by.

But Michael, bashful and retiring, shrank back at the public notice.

No part of this little scene escaped Lord Penruddock. He forgot Daisy, even, while considering it. Here was a stranger who, through the reputation of high deserts, and by a courteous manner, had won the hearts and confidence of people whom he had himself known for years, but who scarcely ventured to address him. Here was a man who had won rank, fame, and fortune, by merit, gladly received where the Earl of Craigavon scarcely deigned to set his foot, and who was greeted, when he did, with a distant respect, born neither of love nor servility. Here was General Sir George Walpole honoured by these people and at home with them, while he, Lord Penruddock, their master, was all but over-looked! Was it offended pride or self-reproach that induced him to turn on his heel and leave the room?

"I must wish you all good-bye," said Sir George Walpole hastily, aware of this sudden exit. "I trust we may meet again. I shall depend on you to keep me informed concerning the Master," to Caradoc; "and on you to keep a little corner in your warm young heart for one who has no daughter to love him as you love your parents."

He held out both hands to Daisy, who put hers into them. The tears which had been gathering, she knew not wherefore, fell; and while he was shaking hands heartily with the other members of her family, she turned to the window to conceal her strange emotion. Lord Penruddock was waiting without, and waved his hand to her. She watched him and Sir George until they disappeared, then, with a weight on her heart she had never known before, looked round and saw Caradoc. The others were at the door, seeing the last of their visitors.

"Why do you cry, Daisy?" he asked tenderly.

"I cannot tell; perhaps the sight of a hero brings tears, as does a sunset or a poem. I wish he had not come!"

"Oh! Daisy, it is something to have had him in our house. I would I were great and noble!"

"You are—you must be, Carad. You have already saved many lives, and will save more. Is not that heroic?"

When the others came in and began to speak of their late visitors, Daisy went to her room. Seated on her low window-seat, she gazed out over the frozen land, until she saw the figures of the two gentlemen on the road. She watched them until they were out of sight, then opened her window to let in some robins that were tapping at the pane. Immediately afterwards a tame pigeon flew in and perched on her shoulder.

"Coo-coo, I am sad, and I know not why," she said, again straining her eyes as the figures re-appeared on the cliffs.

Daisy's Christmas had been unusually exciting, and she was probably beginning to feel the reaction. Caradoc's return had moved her nature to its depths. She had been dreaming of it, and hoping for it ever since he left. In him she found more perfect response to all her impulses than in the quieter Michael; and Christmas Day had been like the dawn of a new life to her. But not only had he, her ideal hero, arrived, but a real hero had presented himself to her. Sir George Walpole had been the topic of conversation at the fireside for many a month, as the merciful saviour of tens of thousands of human beings. She had seen him, spoken to him, shaken hands with him, and now she longed to love and comfort him. She—a child of the farm!

CHAPTER XXI.

GAIETY AT THE CASTLE.

LORD CRAIGAVON was prevailed upon by his son to give an entertainment on a more magnificent scale than usual in honour of Sir George Walpole. As the Earl had his private views when he invited this celebrated man, his former acquaintance, to the Castle, he yielded to Lord Penruddock's request more graciously than usual. Sir George was not only a hero, but a nabob, and wifeless. It was reported that he was looking out for a wife, and the Earl had fixed on one for him. This was his daughter, the Lady Mona. His lordship might certainly have made a worse choice for her, as Sir George had not only made one of those fabulous fortunes amassed in those days by men in the Company's service in India, but had a high reputation as an officer of distinction, honour, and probity. If he had wealth, he had not gained it by malversation: if fame, he had not acquired it by oppression or cruelty to a subject people. He was not an old man, though Lady Mona possibly thought him so; and he was a gentleman and good-looking. He took a commendable pride in having worked his way to reputation, unaided by family or party, and had seen enough of life to appreciate at their just value the honours and titles it brought when its years were passing rapidly away.

Neither did the Earl value the honours and titles; but he esteemed the lacs of rupees which were to turn into solid English gold. Unfortunately, Lady Mona cared neither for the one nor the other; and when the Earl, through his Countess, gave her to understand what his views were, she declared to her

mother that she hated Sir George, and would marry no one but her cousin Everard.

Such were the Castle politics on the day of the state dinner, ball, and supper, given in honour of General Sir George Walpole. Nothing so magnificent had been seen during the present Earl's reign. All the nobility and gentry within twenty miles and more were invited, and the Castle was alive again, after a comparative death for a quarter of a century.

It was the Lady Mona's pleasure that Daisy should be bidden to see her and the Countess dressed; and Daisy, nothing loth, obeyed. Michael had also been summoned—for the old harper was ill, and there was no one else to take his place.

"I wish they would let us alone," said David Pennant.

"I wish they would, father," echoed Caradoc.

"Thou art jealous because thou art not bidden," lad, laughed the old farmer. "We must keep the peace while we can."

"If I could only see Sir George Walpole again!" cried Daisy.

"And some one else?" asked Caradoc, aside.

Daisy coloured as she looked at him with a certain offended dignity, and he regretted that he had put the notion into her head.

When she and Michael, carrying his harp, set out for the Castle, Caradoc, turning his back upon them, took the opposite direction, towards the Esgair, in order to light its beacon—for the afternoon had been somewhat threatening. He saw the white horses in the sea, and knew that when they appeared, and the wind set north-west, there was danger that the ships might be sent towards the quicksands—and the wreckers knew it also.

"You look pale, Michael. Let me help you with the harp," said Daisy, as she and Michael wended their way.

"I am only nervous, Daisy. It is a terrible ordeal."

"But you play so well! And you will see all the grand people—you will see Sir George Walpole! Oh! Michael, I wish I were you!"

"I almost wish you were, Daisy; you are better fitted for it

than I, for you have already been often at the Castle, and I never."

When they reached it Michael was at once conducted to the great entrance-hall, and placed in the harper's seat near the banqueting-room; while Daisy went to the Lady Mona's apartments, as usual. She was received by Miss Manent, who welcomed her affectionately.

"I have had my notice in form from the Earl himself, Daisy," she said. "Lady Mona will not want me after they reach London."

"What a happy release!" exclaimed Daisy, involuntarily. "Now you will be your own mistress, and can come and stay with us. Mother says she hopes you will honour us by a visit, though, of course, we are plain people."

"Oh! if I could! But I must go with the family to town."

Daisy's protest was interrupted by the appearance of Morris, who summoned them to the Countess's boudoir.

"Just one glance, Daisy, before we go down," said Lady Mona, proudly. "I thought you would like to see us."

"Oh yes, thank you, my lady," said Daisy, and stood amazed before the Countess and her daughter.

The Earl had unlocked the strong box in which he kept the family jewels, and they literally blazed with precious stones.

As they stood in the tapestried room to be admired, they looked like pictures that had walked out of their frames. The Countess wore trailing black velvet, point lace, feathers, and diamonds enough to dower her daughter. The Lady Mona was dressed in white satin; while opals and emeralds encircled her neck and arms, and shone in a tiara on her head amid the drooping feathers. They carried pictured and jewelled fans, were stately and tall, and stood before the country maiden and the governess, conscious of rank, beauty, and superiority.

"They are like a queen and princess going to Court. Surely Vashti and Esther were never more beautiful," thought Daisy.

"You can look over the great staircase and see us go in to dinner, and, perhaps, watch the ball afterwards," said Lady

Mona, glancing back at her, as she and her mother went down the corridor.

The Lady Mona was no longer pale and sickly, but passing fair and seemingly healthful. Hope and joy had brought back her bloom, and cheerful society her spirits. Her brother had not returned, accompanied by Captain Everard Soames and other gay friends, in vain.

As Daisy and Miss Manent followed her and the Countess at a humble distance of time and space, they noted the change, and the latter said,—

"Lady Mona has been so kind of late, that I shall grieve to leave her after so many years."

"You will find some one kinder still," was Daisy's straightforward answer.

When they reached the great oaken staircase, they heard the sound of the harp.

"It is Michael," whispered Daisy, breathlessly. "He is frightened, for he does not play his best."

She strained over the balusters, and caught sight of the harp, but not of him. Her attention was soon distracted by the booming of the big dinner-bell, and by hasty steps in the corridor.

"Miss Pennant!" exclaimed Lord Penruddock, who was late, and hurrying down to his guests, already assembled.

Daisy started as he laid his hand on her shoulder, too familiarly, she thought. She wished she had not come.

"I will meet you in the schoolroom after dinner," he added, in a whisper, and passed on, this time touching her hand as it rested on the banisters. She blushed crimson, and said hastily to Miss Manent,—

"Come away."

"Wait till we have seen Sir George Walpole, who is to marry Lady Mona," said her companion.

In a few minutes the company streamed through the hall—a grand and goodly gathering, in silks and satins, uniforms and laced coats.

"There he is: what has he on his breast?" whispered Daisy.

"His orders, his stars, his ribbons, and honours."

"I wish I were Lady Mona, with my hand on his arm, but not gloved. Will he ever shake hands with me again? I feel like Cinderella. Come away, Miss Manent."

"One minute, dear Daisy. See! Lord Penruddock looks up and kisses his hand to us."

"Daisy recoiled; but she glanced again when Miss Manent said, involuntarily, under her breath, "Oh! he has been invited, then."

This was Mr. Tudor, who was walking alone at the tail-end of the company. It was now Miss Manent's turn to blush.

"Why did they not ask you to dinner, and then he would have had a lady like the rest?" said Daisy.

"Hush! That is the duke who takes in her ladyship," whispered Miss Manent, as the Countess swept past.

"He is neither so handsome nor so great as Sir George Walpole. If I were a man I would be a soldier," returned Daisy. "Now they are all gone, I will descend two steps and look at Michael."

She did so, while Miss Manent strove to hold her back. There sat Michael, playing mechanically, surrounded by a crowd of be-liveried lackeys. He glanced up, and her nod and smile seemed to inspire him, for the harp instantly produced its natural tones.

Michael was feeling sadly out of place, and wishing, like Daisy, that he had not come. The sight of her gave him momentary courage, but when she disappeared he relapsed into meditation, and played on dreamily. He thought of old Madoc the harper, and the long weary life he must have led as a dependant on the Earl. He knew that he had been ill-paid and ill-lodged, and that now that he was disabled the Earl grudged him his pittance. Still, while he (Michael) replaced him, that pittance was secure; whereas if a fresh harper were hired it might cease, since the Earl was not one to pen-

sion any but such as could work in return, and Madoc could do nothing but play. Then Michael's thoughts wandered far back to the times when his own ancestors possessed the Castle in which he was playing, and he wondered whether they were more liberal to their musicians than the present Earl. As sounds of revelry reached him from the banqueting-room, and as he glanced in at the magnificent display of plate and covers, of guests and domestics, of portraits and light, his mind grew giddy at the fancies they called up. He was, however, aroused from his dream by a footman, who said sharply,—

"My lord begs that you will play up; his lordship has ordered other harpers from Llanmaes and Glandovy, who were to have been here this afternoon, and he is angry that they have not come."

Michael "played up," and choosing more inspiriting Welsh airs than he had before attempted, sought to compensate for the delay of the other harpers.

When, at last, the banquet was over, and he saw the guests, as in a dream, now crossing the hall, now entering another long suite of rooms, he paused to gaze on the magic scene.

"Do you not sometimes play martial music?" said a voice at his side, and turning, he perceived Sir George Walpole.

He instantly struck up "The March of the Men of Harlech," into which he threw all his native enthusiasm. Sir George stood by to listen with evident interest, beating time, with one finger of his hand extended.

"I scarcely thought there was so much tone in the Welsh harp," he said, when Michael ceased. "But surely I have seen you before; I seldom forget faces," he added, looking at the harpist.

"When you did us the honour to call to inquire for Mr. Ap Adam, sir," replied Michael.

"Ah! to be sure. Has he returned?" asked Sir George.

Michael told him that they had heard nothing of him since he left them, and Sir George attributed his prolonged absence to his own sudden appearance. Then he asked if Michael was

a harper by profession, and received for answer that he was only acting as proxy.

"May I ask to be remembered to your kind friends at the farm," he said, as he moved away; "I am not likely to forget their reception, or the exceeding beauty of your sister."

He was succeeded by the Earl, who addressed Michael haughtily, though with a certain amount of courtesy.

"Michael Pennant, Brynhafod, I believe. It was well you came, for the other harpers have disappointed me. They are idle, worthless vagabonds—useless members of society; taking money, and doing nothing in return."

A servant came up to him.

"The harpers have come, my lord. They would have arrived before, but they have been delayed by the sea-fog. They came by water, and would have been decoyed by false lights and wrecked, but for the witch's fire on the Esgair. The sailors saw it and knew where they were, and so brought them safely to land."

"What is the witch's fire to me? Bid them play," said the Earl, with a frown, joining Sir George Walpole; while Michael offered up a thanksgiving for the safety of the musicians, and wondered what the mysterious light could be.

Four harpers were ushered into the hall, bearing their harps. One of them was blind, and led by a boy, his grandson. Michael rose, moved his own harp, and yielded his place to him, telling him his name.

"I am glad to see a grandson of Pennant, Brynhafod," said the old man; "tell him that, but for the grace of God in whom he trusts, we should have all been dead men this night. The light on the Esgair should be called the angel's, not the witch's fire."

He was scarcely seated, before the harpers were summoned to the ball-room. Michael said that, as he was no longer wanted, he would go home, but the old man begged him to remain, saying that he was "all of a tremble, and felt as if he could not strike a chord." The others seconded the request, so

Michael accompanied them to the saloon that was to be the scene of the dance. They were all seated on a slightly raised platform at the end of this state apartment, and when Michael had placed himself a little behind the others on the left, he surveyed the scene. The room, the lights, the ladies, the painted ceiling, the frescoed walls, the splendours to which he was so unaccustomed, dazzled him, and he thought of Belshazzar's feast. He scarcely knew why, but reflecting on the character of the Earl, he almost expected to see the writing on the wall. He did not know the tune of the first country dance, so he did not attempt to play it, and was able to watch the performers. Lord Penruddock led it off with some "ladye of high degree," and Michael thought his features were ruffled. The Lady Mona danced with some one equally grand, and looked, according to his judgment, the star of the night. As she sailed down the dance he could think of nothing but a swan—white, stately, soft as down. The Earl and the Countess did not dance; neither, he remarked, did Sir George Walpole, who stood apart, with a majestic bearing, heightened by the uniform and orders that he wore. But his cast of countenance in repose was singularly melancholy, if not absolutely stern.

Michael was startled from his observations by the sudden address of Lord Penruddock, who stood slightly below him, and said in English, which he knew the other harpers did not understand,—

"Where is your sister? I saw her before dinner, and have since been to look for her to—to—come and see the dancing, but I cannot find her."

"She is probably gone home, my lord. She was not to stay long."

"Provoking!" muttered his lordship, and looked as if the light of the evening had gone out for him.

He had been to seek Daisy, in order to place her in some spot where she might see and not be seen, and where he might speak flattering words to her from time to time; but she had disappeared.

Michael was able to play most of the successive dances, and joined the other harpers accordingly. But in the pauses between a country dance and a minuet, he overheard, in part, a conversation not intended for him, and to which he did his best not to listen. This was between the Lady Mona and her cousin, Everard. They had been dancing together, and had stationed themselves near the musicians to be out of the hearing of their friends.

"I used every argument that one man can use to another, Mona," said the gentleman. "But it was of no use. If I had been rich, though as old and ugly as a satyr, your father would have heard; but being poor, he was as deaf as a post. I talked for an hour, but all I could get out of him was, 'I am a poor peer, you are a poor soldier. The thing is impossible. I have no money, not a guinea to give her. Everything is entailed on Penruddock. It cannot be, Everard.' At last I got into a passion and called him an old miser, and he turned livid and pointed to the door."

"Oh, Everard! What shall we do?" said Lady Mona in a voice of despair.

"Run away when you come to London. I see no other chance," whispered Everard. "I must leave the castle to-night. I have promised to spend a few days at Llwynon, and go with the Rices. Perhaps you can prevail on your mother to drive over while I am there. It is death to part thus after our brief happiness."

"It will, indeed, be death to me. Cannot you speak to Penruddock? He can do anything with the Earl," said Lady Mona.

"I have spoken; and he says your father is bent on your marrying Sir George Walpole, who is a millionaire, and that Sir George is to have no voice in the matter. But Sir George is more than your slave, Mona. Shall riches or love prevail?"

"Love!" replied Lady Mona, in a husky, agitated voice, putting her hand into her cousin's.

He held it a few moments, bent over it, and touched it with

his lips. A faint colour overspread her face, then a deadly pallor.

"Go! go!" she said. The Earl is coming, and Sir George."

"Let me take you first to my aunt," he said, offering his arm.

Michael saw that she staggered as she took it, and watched them until they disappeared amongst the crowd.

Shortly afterwards the Earl came towards the harpers. He looked grim and angry, and they began to fear they had offended. But he singled out Michael, and said in his commanding way, "Fetch your brother, the doctor. Lady Mona is ill."

Michael hastened away, and as he ran through the principal entrance, heedless of decorum, he saw Captain Everard jump into a carriage and drive off.

CHAPTER XXII.

SICKNESS AT THE CASTLE.

WHEN Captain Everard had left Lady Mona with her mother, he hurried away. She said that she felt faint, and when the Earl and Sir George Walpole joined them, they took her to an adjoining room, where she immediately fainted. It was at Sir George's suggestion that Caradoc was summoned. He said that the young man had been assistant to his physician in London, and since no other doctor was at hand, he would probably be efficient enough. The Earl rejoined grimly that she was used to fainting; but that he had no objection to send for Pennant. Morris was summoned, who was accustomed to Lady Mona's attacks, and when they had sufficiently restored her, they led her to her room. The Earl and Countess afterwards returned to their guests, and the festivities continued until morning.

When Caradoc arrived, the company were beginning to disperse. The quadrangular court was crowded with carriages, through which he had to thread; for he did not go to the postern door, but took the nearest and easiest road. This caused him to meet Sir George Walpole, who was sauntering about uneasily.

"I am glad you are come, for she is worse than they imagine," he said.

He led Caradoc into one of the suites of rooms, lately the scene of so much gaiety, and told him to wait while he sought the Countess. Thus Caradoc had a few moments for observation and reflection. In the twilight of the previous evening he had been lighting his lantern on the Esgair, and had subsequently

met the harpers, whom the beacon had, under almighty Providence, saved. Then he had watched near the castle for Daisy, and had returned home with her. Sitting up for Michael, he had pondered over his possible future, and was suddenly aroused from his dream by the information that he was needed professionally by the Earl's daughter. Professionally! The honour would be accounted great by all who heard of it, and his fortune be credited as begun. As he stood awaiting the comers, he glanced down the suite of rooms, usually so gloomy and saw what life and light had done to transform them. In his ardent desire to benefit mankind, he thought what scope there was for good in that ancient Castle, and the money that its lands produced.

"This is the young man whom I ventured to recommend to your ladyship as having been with the celebrated Dr. Moore," said Sir George Walpole, as he and the Countess came in.

Caradoc bowed, and Lady Craigavon made a slight inclination, as she threw herself on a sofa. He stood before her, tall, lithe, and handsome. Sir George stood also. She asked the latter to ring the bell, and, when it was answered, ordered Morris to be summoned. She was herself evidently overcome by the fatigue and anxiety of the day. Sir George left the room, and was succeeded by the Earl, who acknowledged Caradoc's bow by a stiff nod, and went to the Countess to inquire if she were ill. Knowing him only as the stern, avaricious Lord of Craigavon, he was surprised to hear a sound of tenderness in his usually hard, deep voice as he spoke to his wife.

"Feel her pulse," he said sternly to Caradoc.

"Her ladyship is fatigued. She will be better for rest," returned the young doctor.

"I am only alarmed for Mona," she said to the Earl, holding out her hand.

Morris came, and was ordered to help her ladyship to her room and return. When they were gone, Lord Craigavon said to Caradoc,—

"Lady Mona Penruddock is merely nervous. You must

not humour her. If she speaks of engaging the young woman who lives at your house as maid to accompany her to town, discourage it; for she is not to go."

"Your lordship may depend on my doing so; for my father and mother would not allow their adopted daughter to visit London under such circumstances," replied Caradoc, flushing.

"Good," said the Earl, less authoritatively; then, after a pause, added, "You are not a physician, I suppose?"

"Only a surgeon as yet, my lord."

The Earl put the guinea he held in his hand into his pocket.

"See Lady Craigavon again, and send medicine if necessary," he ordered, as Morris returned.

Caradoc followed her to Lady Mona's apartment. He found the Countess there, and mother and daughter were in tears. He noted the fact, but said nothing. Having felt Lady Mona's pulse, and extracted from her a few ungracious replies to such queries as he deemed necessary, he went with Morris to another room, where such medicines were stored as she had been in the habit of taking. He mixed two simple composing draughts, and ordered them to be administered to his unexpected patients.

"Well, some people have the luck!" exclaimed Morris. "Who could have thought that you, Caradoc Pennant, would have been prescribing for their ladyships?"

Caradoc smiled; and Morris said inwardly, "To be sure he is a very fine young man, though he does belong to them stuck-up Pennants." He asked if he were to come again on the morrow, and she went to inquire, returning with a request that he would go back to Lady Mona.

"Tell Daisy to be ready, for we are going to London almost immediately," Lady Mona whispered.

"I will give your ladyship's message," he answered, fearing to excite her, then, by contradiction.

"And come again to-morrow, or rather this afternoon," said the Countess, languidly.

"Might I suggest that your ladyship should go to bed," he replied, with a kind of pity in his voice.

She glanced at him, sharply, for her, and nodded an affirmative. As he bowed himself out he was struck with the picture before him. Dawn was creeping in through the lozenge-shaped panes of the small, deep windows, and seemed to replace the flickering light of the waning candles. Lady Mona lay, pale and fair, beneath the heavy damask curtains of her huge bed; while the Countess, in the velvet and diamonds already described, reclined on a couch by her side. Morris was folding the white satin dress, cast aside in a moment of faintness, and forgotten since; and a pet dog was curled up in a flannelled bed on an easy-chair. He remarked that there was no fire in the grate, and paused to say that Lady Mona must be kept warm. He did not know that the Earl strongly objected to a superfluity of fires, as tending to weaken the constitution—as he put it. His own was of iron. It was his habit to cast the burden of his own sins on other people and things. He thus considered himself irresponsible.

He was pacing the corridor heavily when Caradoc passed down it.

"How are they?" he asked, abruptly.

"Better, my lord," replied Caradoc, curtly.

"I suppose you have ceased to be inquisitive, and can hold your tongue?" said the Earl, evidently recalling the Tower.

"I am still scientifically inquisitive, but I can be silent, my lord," returned Caradoc.

"Then come and see them again. Good-night."

Caradoc passed on, and finally reached the hall. Here he was met by Lord Penruddock, who, without speaking, accompanied him into the court.

"What fools women are! What on earth is the matter?" he asked, when they were out of earshot.

"I hope they are better," said Caradoc.

"Why should they be ill? They have been dying of *ennui* for years, and now they have amusement they are dying of gaiety. What is best for them?"

"An entire change, perhaps."

"They are about to have it—and, by the way, tell your sister, or the little waif, Daisy—she is a large waif now,—that Lady Mona is bent on her going to London. Do you remember when her dog brought in her doll?"

"Perfectly, my lord."

"She will make a *furore* in town, with her beauty and her costume. You will scarcely get her back again."

Lord Penruddock glanced at Caradoc with a sort of careless impertinence, not quite natural to him, and received a look of proud indifference in return.

"Daisy Pennant is not likely to make a *furore* in London," said Caradoc; "the great world would be too grand for her, and she would be too good for it."

"You have not outgrown your ill manners, sir, nor your determination to browbeat your betters," said his lordship, hotly. "Perhaps you also remember the Eagle's nest?"

"Yes, my lord—and the Tower," replied Caradoc, with an involuntary smile.

Lord Penruddock coloured.

"You remind me, sir, of an event in my life which caused me some regret and anger at the time, as well as of an unpaid debt. I owe you and your dog my life, as well as salvation from a hasty act that might have cost your or your brother's life. Tell me in what way I can repay you."

This was said with a manner so haughty that it seemed rather like conferring than having received a benefit. Yet, in after-years, Caradoc was glad that the words had been spoken, and that he had answered them calmly.

"I had nearly forgotten that scene, my lord. Yours was a mere boyish outbreak, mine a natural impulse. If God made me an instrument for good to you, I am thankful, and need no reward."

Their eyes met—Caradoc's steadfast, luminous, far-seeing; Penruddock's turbid and eager. They were walking hastily onward in the mist of the early morning, and had reached the bridge across the rapid brook.

"You Pennants are too independent; you will not let one do you a good turn if one would," said Penruddock, pausing.

"Should the time come when we need it, my lord, I will not fail to ask you," returned Caradoc.

"Be it so," said Lord Penruddock, and seemed about to add more.

He was really sorry for the part he had played in his encounters with the Pennants before he went to Eton, and was desirous of saying so, but pride held him back. He had never been taught humility, and it was not in him either by nature or inheritance. Moreover, he wished to subdue Caradoc's spirit to his will, and did not know that his best chance was first to subdue his own. He felt, however, that he had stooped sufficiently to an inferior, so he restrained a better impulse and returned to Daisy.

"My mother and sister will be annoyed and offended it Miss Daisy does not accompany them to London," he said.

"Not so the Earl," replied Caradoc.

"His objections will cease when I represent the case, and——"

"My lord, the time of need has come sooner than we expected," interrupted Caradoc hastily; "I claim your so recently made promise. I beg you will not interfere in this matter."

Again the hot blood rushed to Penruddock's cheeks, and he put himself in an attitude of defiance, as he muttered an oath and exclaimed, "Dog in the manger! you want her all to yourself."

Caradoc's blood rose also.

"She belongs to us, my lord, and we will protect her from harm. She might have belonged to you had the Earl been pleased to claim her as wreckage. Good-morning to your lordship."

Caradoc's manner was as haughty as Lord Penruddock's, who clenched his fist and levelled a blow at him; but he turned and walked away. He had crossed the brook and was half-way up the hill before his lordship gained composure.

"Impertinent clodhopper!" the latter exclaimed, looking after him. "And he has nailed me to silence. Nevertheless, I will compass my end and frustrate his, even though I keep my promise. Why does the fellow interest while he angers me? And why do they all twit me about that horrible tithe of death and destruction? I abhor the place, the people, almost my own father, and but for Mona should never have come back. Now I am chained to the soil by one of the very waifs whose name I hate. I can no more tear myself away than the veriest slave in the market of Constantinople. By heavens! if Caradoc Pennant come between us I will call him out. Him!—a farmer's son! Fight a duel with a paltry compounder of drugs, about a—a— Ah, Daisy! I find no word. The queenliest, fairest, purest flower of the mountains!"

When Caradoc reached home, Daisy was on the look-out for him. She inquired anxiously for Lady Mona, and when told that she was really indisposed, was much distressed. Caradoc gave her the message concerning London, and watched its effect. She looked rather perplexed than pleased. They went together into the hall, where his breakfast was awaiting him, the rest of the family having taken theirs, and Michael being still in bed. Daisy remained to wait upon him, and he, forgetful of his meal, began to talk of what was uppermost in his mind, which was still excited by his encounter with Lord Penruddock.

"Do you wish to go to London, Daisy?" he asked.

"I should like to see that great city of which I have heard so much, of course, Carad," she replied; "and I should wish to please Lady Mona, who is ill, and has been kind to me; but——" she paused and coloured.

"Yes, Daisy; but what?"

"I think I am best at home."

Caradoc understood her reticence, but dared not ask her reasons. They were both silent, and he began his breakfast. She was the first to speak again.

"Had you been in London, I should have striven to go—

indeed, my heart was set upon it while you were there. But now we are all so happy together that I seem no longer to think of the Tower, and the Monument, and the Abbey, and St. Paul's, and all the other grand sights of which I had been dreaming. I might have visited them with you."

"Not from the Earl's mansion, Daisy: I should scarcely have been admitted there, and you would probably be a prisoner at the caprice of Lady Mona. Should you care to be considered, by the outer world at least, her ladyship's maid?"

"Certainly not, Carad; Morris is her maid. I should be her—what should I be? Scarcely her friend, or even her companion. I had not considered this point. I should certainly not wish to accompany the Castle household in any doubtful capacity."

"You are right, Daisy. Better be first at the farm than last at the Castle, whatever the temptations."

"But they say I am spoilt here, and I think I am. Besides, when I pause to consider, I feel that even here I have no right to be first."

Caradoc looked quickly and reproachfully at Daisy, who was seated on the settle opposite to him, her elbow on one of its arms. She understood the glance.

"Right!—oh, Daisy!" he ejaculated.

She trembled beneath his expressive eyes.

"Forgive me, Carad; it was you who brought me here, and I have had, oh, such a happy life!"

"And will, I hope, to the end."

Why did they sigh and look aside? And why did Caradoc hastily finish his breakfast and inquire for his brother? "To the end!" The words were so suggestive that he wished he had not used them, while she shaded her eyes, and wondered what that end would be. Then, slowly rising, she said gravely,

"We must pray for direction in all things. I have been proud and hasty concerning Lady Mona, yet I desire to be humble. Why cannot I be humble, Carad?"

"I am always asking myself the same question, Daisy, but the 'flesh warreth against the spirit,'" he replied.

"Grandfather and Michael are gifted with a grand humility. I am afraid the rest of us are high-minded. Even mother, who is so gentle, is proud—proud of you, Carad; and yet she does not know as much of you as I do, for she believes in the witch's fire. Under Providence, you saved a ship last night."

Daisy went impulsively up to Caradoc and held out her hand. As he took it, his face flushed; he uttered the one word, "Sister," and hastily left the room.

Shortly after he had a conversation with his father concerning her visit to London. He told him discreetly of the elements at work at the Castle; of the wish of the ladies, and counter-commands of the Earl; but he did not mention Lord Penruddock, because he knew that his father was hot-tempered, like himself, and might add fuel to the fire he had already kindled. David Pennant laughed his hearty laugh at the complication Daisy had caused.

"What can they want with a country lass?" he said. "It is but the fancy of a spoilt child, and Lady Mona would tire of her in a week. As to the Earl, poor coward! he shall be free of blame. Put it all upon me; my shoulders are broad enough. Say that I will not part with her. Tell them, if you will, that I hope she will soon have a husband to keep her at home, and, meanwhile, her father forbids her going into the wicked London world."

Caradoc started.

"A husband! what do you mean, father?"

"Michael, of course. What else?"

Caradoc asked no more questions; but he had a difficult part to play with Lady Mona when he went to see her and her mother that afternoon. Discretion, firmness, tenderness are a doctor's watchwords. They were Caradoc's. Though young in years he was old in thought, and the first wish of his heart was to benefit his fellow-creatures. He had been taught his duty to God and his neighbour from earliest infancy, and how

best to do it was his constant question with himself. He tried to realize his grandfather's frequent advice, "Work to-day, leave to-morrow, lad." But he had aspirations that overleapt the boundary of to-day, and he could not do it. It is difficult for the young to live by the day, though best for all.

He found his patients better, but still languid and depressed. They were in the Countess's boudoir, not having as yet joined their guests.

"You gave my message to Daisy?" said Lady Mona, when the customary questions had been put and answered.

"Yes; and she was much obliged for your ladyship's kind wish. But my father thinks her too young and inexperienced to leave home, and hopes you will be so good as to receive her excuses."

"I shall certainly receive no excuses: she must come!" exclaimed Lady Mona, roused at once. "Did you ever hear such a thing, mamma? Refuse me!—refuse us!"

"I daresay Mr. Pennant will relent, love," said the Countess.

"Relent, indeed! Tell him we insist on her coming. Tell her I wish to see her to-morrow afternoon. I will take no denial."

Lady Mona burst into hysterical crying.

"Your ladyship must compose yourself," said Caradoc, sitting down beside her, forgetful that he had not been told to be seated. "If you weaken yourself by hysteria you will be unfit for the long journey to London."

He intended no artifice by his words, not knowing how intensely she longed for this journey; but they took instantaneous effect.

"You will fit me for it?" she cried, calming herself; "and you will send Daisy here to-morrow. I shall ask her myself. Parents are hard and cruel, and think little of our wishes."

She was breaking down again, when Caradoc said, kindly but firmly—

"I can promise your ladyship nothing unless you resist this weakness; I can cure you in a few days if you do."

"And let Daisy accompany us to London?"

"That I must leave between her and my father?"

"You will send her here to-morrow?"

"I will tell her that your ladyship wishes to see her."

Lady Mona perceived that she had to deal with one stronger than herself. She glanced at him haughtily, and he rose, reminded that he was seated unasked.

Lady Craigavon suggested æther and other remedies.

"Her ladyship's own will is the best curative. I will send some medicine," he said, going towards her.

"And Daisy?" whispered the Countess.

"I have no doubt she will come to-morrow; but my father objects to her visiting London," he replied, in a low tone.

"You will come again, of course?"

"Certainly, if your ladyship wishes."

And Caradoc left the mother and daughter with a great pity at his heart.

CHAPTER XXIII.

PROJECTED ELOPEMENTS.

THE Earl made the most of the illness of his wife and daughter, in order to be rid of his guests without incivility. The only one he pressed to remain was Sir George Walpole, whom he invited to accompany his family and himself to London.

Accordingly, when Daisy went to see Lady Mona, the Castle had returned to its customary quietude. She found her alone. Her manner towards her was much changed, and Daisy was conscious that the refusal to allow her to accompany her ladyship to London had caused the change. Caradoc had been at the Castle before her, and had repeated Mr. Pennant's determination.

"I believe no tenant has ever so thwarted our wishes before," said Lady Mona, haughtily; "your foster-father will probably repent his obstinacy."

"I am sorry to displease or disappoint you," replied Daisy, "but I should be quite useless to your ladyship."

"On the contrary, you are the only person I know who could help me in an emergency; the only one I could trust."

Daisy looked surprised, but made no comment.

"If I confide to you how you could be of such service to me, will you promise secrecy on your oath?" continued Lady Mona, excitedly.

"I could not swear, my lady; and I never had a secret to keep in——"

Daisy paused, remembering the Esgair.

"Oh! you also have your secret. You also are in love, and will sympathise with me!" exclaimed Lady Mona, while Daisy grew crimson. "You will, at least, promise not to betray me, if I tell you all; and then you will, I am sure, go with me and help me."

"I will certainly never betray your ladyship. Whatever you think fit to tell me shall be sacred, but——"

"I will have no buts. You must be my friend and help me for I am driven to despair."

Then Lady Mona told Daisy of her love for her cousin Everard, and her father's disapproval of it; told her that the Earl was bent on her marrying the rich Sir George Walpole, who had not even proposed for her, and that she was resolved to marry Everard, come what would.

Daisy listened in silence and sympathy. She felt that Lady Mona must be in some strange strait thus to make her a confidante, and waited to hear further.

"Have you nothing to say?" asked Lady Mona, vehemently.

"I grieve for your ladyship with all my heart," replied Daisy. "But how can I help you?"

"By coming with us to London; taking Morris's place, who shall go and visit her friends; supplying also Miss Manent's place, who has another situation ready, and helping me to elope with Captain Everard."

Lady Mona seized Daisy's arm and fixed her eyes upon her. She was quite beside herself, and looked so wild and excited that Daisy was terrified.

"Speak, girl!" she cried, shaking the arm roughly.

"I do not know what to say; I do not understand you," returned Daisy, as calmly as she could.

"To elope means to run away and be married privately; or to post to Gretna Green and be married in the Scotch Borderland. Hundreds of girls do it who have cruel fathers, and few have so hard and miserly a one as I have."

"But he is your father, dear Lady Mona, and they say he

loves you," replied Daisy, simply, pity mixed with a sort of reproach in her voice.

"It is useless to argue. I have not been immured here all these years without knowing that he would sell me and his soul for gold——!"

"Hush, Lady Mona! I cannot listen to such words," interrupted Daisy. "You forget that I am a country girl, beneath you in rank, unused to confidences, and unacquainted with the great world."

"You have education and sense, and are a woman. Oh, Daisy! will you not help me?"

This appeal was followed by a passionate burst of tears. In her momentary abandonment and blind passion, Lady Mona forgot all differences of position, and threw herself into Daisy's arms.

"Do all who love suffer thus?" Daisy thought, as she listened to the sobs and felt the throbbing of the heart.

"Have you seen him—my cousin Everard?" asked Lady Mona, suddenly, rousing herself, and withdrawing from Daisy.

"Once, with my Lord Penruddock," replied Daisy, casting down her eyes; for she remembered how both gentlemen had stood to watch her as she passed them by on horseback.

"Did you ever see any one so handsome?" asked Lady Mona. "Answer me."

"I think my brother Carad," replied Daisy.

"He cannot be compared with Captain Everard," said Lady Mona, resuming her natural hauteur. "Now, Daisy, you will go with me to town?"

"I cannot; and if I went, I should not dare to help your ladyship to disobey your parents."

Lady Mona rose, and took her by the shoulder.

"Should not dare! What do you mean?"

"I should not dare to aid you to break God's commandments."

Daisy rose also. They stood face to face; Lady Mona flushed, impassioned, angry; Daisy flushed, also, but firm.

"If Pennant of Brynhafod consents, you will go?"

"No, my lady. I should be neither a fitting maid nor companion to your ladyship. And in neither state could I abet you in leaving your home secretly. Oh! think well before you do it. I am but an ignorant girl; still I know that if you pray to God, He will direct you; and perhaps in time the Earl may consent. Indeed, indeed, I grieve for you, and will also pray that you may be preserved from this great temptation."

"If you will not help me, I am lost," groaned Lady Mona. "I could not trust Morris; and Miss Manent is dull as yonder heavy clouds. You, a poor foundling, cast ashore on our land, to resist me! I wonder I have so far lowered myself as thus to confide in you."

"Oh, if you had not, Lady Mona! but your secret is safe with me," returned Daisy, with dignity.

"Go, go!" cried Lady Mona, pointing to the door.

"I cannot leave your ladyship in anger. Perhaps we may never meet again," said Daisy, humbly. "It will be evening soon; and at the farm we never let the sun go down upon our wrath. Forgive me, if I have offended you."

Lady Mona glanced at Daisy's beautiful pathetic face, and covering her own with her hands, sank down upon the sofa. Daisy knelt by her side, and, clasping her hands, prayed for her.

"You are good, Daisy; I am bad," said Lady Mona after a long pause. "You are happier than I. But since you will not help me, you had better go."

"I will pray that you may be permitted to marry your cousin Everard," said Daisy, rising.

"I shall marry him, permitted or not," rejoined her companion, whose mood had changed again.

"If I went to London with you?" asked Daisy.

"Certainly. I want you to help me. You, who have lived a free life that I have envied hundreds of times, might lend a hand to liberate me. The peasant who covets my wealth,

little knows how I covet his poverty. To be free—only to be free——!"

"Dear Lady Mona!" sighed Daisy.

"Pray do not call me dear—you, who will not aid me. Yet, good-bye; and thank you for helping me to pass many weary hours cheerfully. I know you will keep my secret; for if you are hard as steel, you are also as true."

It was now Daisy's turn to break down. She could bear the reproaches, but not the kindness.

"There is nothing that I would not do for you, if only I could tell my father and mother. I cannot deceive them," she said, her tears falling fast.

"Hush! some one is coming," exclaimed Lady Mona. "They must not see that you are crying. Run down the west passage, then home by the beach. I will let you through."

They went down a narrow corridor that led from the ladies' apartments to a private entrance into the gardens, thence to a gate which opened on a path down the cliffs. They stood here a moment—the frowning Castle above, and the sea and caves below.

"Good-bye, Daisy," said Lady Mona, holding out her hand.

"May the Lord bless and guide you, my lady!" returned Daisy, through her sobs and tears.

Before she reached the bottom of the cliff she turned, to see Lady Mona standing where she had left her. They waved their hands to one another, and then Daisy wandered slowly and sadly on to the beach. She sat down to compose herself and think over what had passed, before she took the road from Ton Bay to the farm. She felt so much pity for Lady Mona that she would willingly have accompanied her to London, or elsewhere, if she could really have served her. But when she considered her words, she was convinced that she was wanted more as a tool than a friend, and her frank soul revolted from all deceit, especially filial. She was even unhappy because her foster-parents were unacquainted with

"They waved their hands to one another."

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the mystery of the Esgair, even though it was maintained to prevent their getting into trouble with the Earl. A secret was ever a burden to her, though she had a second to keep, which would, she feared, weigh down her conscience. She asked herself whether she ought not to warn some one of this projected elopement, but she could not break her promise. Besides, young and inexperienced as she was, she believed that Lady Mona, who had hitherto passed but a dreary existence, would be happy with her cousin and love, and she could not find it in her heart to wish her married contrary to her inclination, or condemned to the Castle for life. Her glimpses of aristocratic existence had not been rose-coloured, though she had sense enough to perceive that it was the character of the people that influenced the life, much more than the life the people. "Were I rich and great," she thought, "I should find happiness in making others happy."

Her tears were scarcely dried when her reverie was broken by the appearance of Lord Penruddock. He had heard of her visit to the Castle, and had been watching for an opportunity to meet her alone. Tired of waiting, he had sought her in his sister's rooms, whence he had followed her to the beach. She rose, and was about to pass him with a curtsey, but he joined her. She quickened her pace, and he did the same. He asked her why she had run away from the Castle on the day of the ball, and she told him that she had had no intention of remaining after she had seen the Countess and Lady Mona. He tried one or two other subjects, but receiving only monosyllables in return, he dashed so suddenly into the one nearest his heart that she was startled into a prompt reply.

"What has my sister settled concerning your going with us to London?" he asked.

"I have told her ladyship decidedly that I cannot accompany her," she answered.

"Then I shall not go," he said, with apparent carelessness, yet looking at her inquiringly. "Daisy, I cannot tear myself from the place where you live."

She made no comment on this assertion, but hurried on.

"Why do you walk so fast? I am serious, and you must hear me while I have the opportunity of speaking to you alone."

"It is getting late, my lord, and I am expected at Brynhafod," she rejoined calmly, not slackening her pace.

They reached the road to the farm from the bay, and he laid his hand on her arm, repeating that he had something important to say to her. She paused and listened.

"When I was a boy I chanced to come to this bay, when your big dog brought in a tattered doll from a wreck. That insolent coxcomb, Caradoc Pennant—insolent then as now—carried it off, and said it was yours. His father made some impertinent remark to mine concerning waifs, which I have not forgotten. I little thought then, however, that the owner of the doll would grow up into the girl who was to gain entire ascendency over me, body and soul; whose presence is the light of my life—whose absence is night! Daisy, I love you!"

"I scarcely understand you, my lord. Your words are strange, and not seemly from your lordship to me," said Daisy, withdrawing as much as she could, and speaking with fearless composure.

"Why not seemly? Your appearance and manners tell that you are a lady, and I, as a gentleman, address you as an equal. If what I say is strange, I rejoice, because no one can have been before me, and I shall hope to win the first blush of your love."

Daisy was silent awhile. Lord Penruddock's manner was respectful, if impetuous, and there was something in her heart that told her he was sincere. As she stood, her hand on the rough fence that separated her from the road, her face to the sea and him, she saw an expression in his countenance that spoke for him. At last her words came:

"My lord, I can never be your equal, for I have neither name nor position. I never stand on this spot without trying to picture the scene when, in the dead of night, and amid

the howling of the tempest, Gwylfa and my brother Carad rescued me from the waves."—Here she blushed unconsciously.—"I see him carry me up this path to the farm, and my dear mother receive me. I know how they have adopted me, and loved me as their own, ever since that hour, when my own parents were swallowed up, perhaps, by yonder sea. They are so good as to consider me their equal; yours I can never be."

"By heavens! you are far superior to any girl I have ever seen, and I have had good experience," said Lord Penruddock. "You are a queen in beauty and bearing, and shall be my queen and future Countess of Craigavon, if only—" (he paused)—"if only you will consent to be mine."

Again Daisy said she did not understand him; nor did she, for she could not believe that he would marry a nameless foundling.

"Then I will speak plainly," he continued. "As long as my father lives I am dependent on him, but he has never resisted my will for long. If you will elope with me, and marry me privately, I shall soon bring him round to forgive us both, and then you will be in the place for which nature, and possibly birth, intended you."

Daisy understood him now—for had she not that same afternoon been asked to assist in another elopement? Why was she, a country girl, suddenly initiated into the ways of the great world in this twofold manner? Again she flushed and feared—for she was unused to such scenes, and no one had ever said to her before, in so many words, "Daisy, I love you!" And they made her heart beat rapidly, for she felt their mysterious responsibility. She trembled lest she should excite Lord Penruddock as she had excited his sister, and she glanced round in the vague hope of seeing a friend. Her eyes fell on Gwylfa, quietly pursuing his usual way to the beach. She called him, and the old dog was soon at her side, eyeing Lord Penruddock suspiciously. His lordship hated the dog as he hated his master, remembering only his resistance to his will, and not his benefit. Daisy stooped over him, and Lord Penruddock,

impelled by passion, put his arm round her waist. She started back, and Gwylfa growled ominously as he stood between them.

"My lord," said Daisy, now really majestic as the queen he had called her, "I cannot elope with you. If you are in earnest, I desire to thank you for—for—your——"

"Say love—devotion—worship!" broke in his lordship.

"But," she continued, "I hope to live and die with the Pennants of Brynhafod, once, I am told, also the Pennants of Craigavon. Good-bye, my lord."

Before he could answer, she and Gwylfa had cleared the slight fence, and were in the road; and, while he was blindly following, they had scaled a rocky path, and were out of sight before he secured a footing on it.

"I will have her, if I marry her before the world in the parish church!" he cried. "I never loved a girl so well before—never felt that I could compass friend and foe, earth and heaven, to get her. I will even make my father consent. As to the Pennants, it shall go hard with them if they refuse. I shall go mad if they resist me. I am mad—idiotic—out of my mind! What would the world say?—and what do I care? What are all the women in all the countries I have visited—in all the capitals of Europe—in all the vortex of society—to one Daisy?"

CHAPTER XXIV.

THREAT OF EJECTION.

A FEW days before the one fixed for the journey to town of the Castle family, Mr. Pennant went to pay the Earl his rent, and to speak of various matters connected with his farm and the parish generally. Having satisfied the Earl to the utmost farthing in the matter of money, he began the subject of restoring the church and vicarage house.

"I told Mr. Tudor that the parish could do it. I am at present too poor," said the Earl.

"I am afraid the parish is poorer, my lord. I have sounded the farmers, and we are all willing to do what we can; but our 'all' falls short of the mark," returned Pennant.

"Then the repairs must stand over."

"But the church is in a sad state, and the house falling to pieces. We want the parson there, my lord. With the blessing of God, the Monad people would improve—are improving, indeed—and if he were near, he and my son and daughter, and the vicar's lady, maybe, would go far towards teaching them to give up their bad practices. If they set the example, the rest of this notorious coast would, perhaps, follow it by degrees."

"That is no affair of mine."

"Then I must make so bold as to say that it should be, my lord; since you are lord of the manor. But if you decline, it rests with me, and, God willing, I will set to work. We can get funds for the vicarage, if not for the church. Will your lordship find another place for the keeper?"

"I have no other place. He must remain where he is."

Mr. Pennant made an exclamation that startled the Earl into looking at him for a moment. He had hitherto kept his eyes riveted on some papers that strewed the table at which he sat. The farmer's indignation showed itself in his face as he said—

"I should be sorry to resist your lordship, but I must, as churchwarden, take this into my own hands, and request the man to look out for himself, and leave the vicarage."

"You had better rest a few months. I believe your office and lease run out together at Easter, and then——"

The grim Earl paused.

"Yes, my lord. I am to be re-appointed churchwarden, and I was just going to speak of renewing the lease."

"I do not mean to renew it."

Pennant started, but the Earl kept his eyes on the paper.

"Not renew our lease! What do you mean, my lord?"

"That I have other views concerning Brynhafod, and shall not lease it again."

"Am I to understand that you will not renew the lease which my father and grandfather had from yours?"

"Yes."

"Then how are we to rent it, my lord?"

"You will leave it, if you please."

"Leave a place that we have inhabited and farmed for generations—that was once our own—that we have centupled in value?"

"Yes."

"And wherefore, my lord?"

"I intend to manage it myself."

Pennant was silent from pain and astonishment. People had warned him of this, but he had not believed it. He was a hot-tempered man, and knew that if he spoke at once he should speak passionately. And, in spite of himself, his righteous wrath burst forth before the Earl and he parted. He resumed, however, with tolerable composure.

"I suppose your lordship will, at least, let us have the place during my father's lifetime. He is over eighty, and his lease of

life must expire soon after his lease of property. The one was for ninety and nine years, and the other can scarcely be for more.

"I shall require possession at the time of expiration."

"It will kill my father to leave Brynhafod, where he was born and bred, and has lived all his days. You would have his death on your conscience. But possibly a death more or less in our class doesn't matter to your lordship."

"Death! What have I to do with death? Am I a murderer."

"I did not say so, my lord."

Even Pennant, who knew the Earl well, was surprised and horrified at the expression of his countenance at that moment. It was not only grim, but ghastly. It quickly passed off, however, and left him cold and unimpressionable as usual.

"One word more, my lord," said Pennant. "If you insist on our giving up Brynhafod, I must press the work of years into as many months. It shall go hard with me if I do not atone for past neglect, by furbishing up the vicarage and marrying up the parson, before I seek another and a better landlord. It shall go harder still if we don't preach and pray the wreckers into giving up their devilish practices. They already believe the witch's fire to be God's work, and so do I. Neither you nor I can strive against Him. You may turn us out of house and home, but if 'the Lord is our castle, whom shall we fear?' Whereas, a mansion without Him were no shelter. 'Unless the Lord build the house their labour is but lost that build it.' Heap up your gold, my lord; fill your dungeons, cellars, and towers with wreckage; rackrent your land; scan your coasts from the highest babel you can build; reign over all you can see; and still there is One more powerful than you, who can, if so he will, humble you to the dust, and bring you in sorrow to the grave."

As Mr. Pennant spoke, the Earl quailed visibly; and when he rose in his excitement, and stood before him with his hand outstretched, his lordship pushed his chair back, and seized the

bell-rope, as if afraid of an assault. Pennant smiled contemptuously.

"You need have no fear of me or mine, my lord. We shall not harm you; but you have myrmidons who may. If you change your mind, you will find my sons honest and true, as their forefathers have been. I trust yours may be as great a blessing to you as mine are to me."

With this Farmer Pennant left the room. The words "Curse that fellow!" followed him; but he did not hear them. He hurried out into the servants' offices, and asked for Lord Penruddock, who chanced to be at home. He was shown into his private room, where he waited a little while alone. He was much excited, and sought in vain to calm himself. To leave Brynhafod was almost like relinquishing life. He did not realize it, but he said to himself that he would not do it without a struggle. He paced the room until Lord Penruddock came in, when he began the subject at once. He told him the facts of his late interview with the Earl, and told them hotly enough. Then he added, "Now, my lord, I had hoped that as my father and I have rented under your father, so my son Michael might rent under you. Is this to be crushed by some sudden fancy? In bad times as well as good we have paid our rent to the day; we have worked the farm as if it were our own; we have spent thousands upon the land; we have improved the house and buildings; we have, to the best of our ability, done as we would be done by."

"I believe you," said Penruddock. "You have done everything but submit to your superiors; and now they have the power, they would give you a lesson to learn on your respective positions."

"We have not fawned and cringed, my lord, neither have we encroached or tried familiarity. We have strictly kept the distance allotted to us by birth, education, and duty, and maintained by the Earl's will. A little more condescension on his part might have won a little more love on ours; and I counsel your lordship, if it should please God, in the course of nature,

to bring you to the earldom, to seek to win love rather than servile obedience."

"I am obliged for your condescending advice, Mr. Pennant. When I succeed my father, I shall doubtless know how to act. May I ask what is your business with me?"

"It is twofold, my lord. First, to beg you, who have influence with the Earl, to ask him to consider before he ejects a family who have more than paid the value of the estate; and secondly, to entreat your lordship not to put silly notions into the head of our child Daisy."

During this brief colloquy, the speakers grew hot and angry; but when the word "Daisy" was uttered, it had the effect of calming them. Mr. Pennant looked at Lord Penruddock with a scrutinizing decision, while the young man's eyes fell for a few moments; not for long, however. When he glanced up again, they were defiant, and he resumed, after a pause, resolutely, if quietly,—

"The young lady has, then, confided to you what I said to her?"

"In part, my lord. We have no secrets in our household,"

"Indeed! You are especially favoured. I understand that you have forbidden her accompanying my sister to London."

"I have, my lord; and what must have passed between you and her proves that I was right."

"Perhaps so. Now for your twofold request. We will compromise the matter. If you will advise Miss Daisy to yield to my wishes, I will advise the Earl to yield to yours, and I am sure our advice would be followed in both cases; for if she will consent to what I asked her, I will manage that you shall keep the farm."

"You made-believe that you would marry her privately, my lord. We know what that means in a gentleman of your position."

"I meant exactly what I said, and mean it still. You stand in the place of her father, and I repeat it to you. I love her, and consider her fit to fill any position; and when she is my

wife, my father will receive her as such, for he has never contradicted any wish of mine. You shall be present at the ceremony, if you will, only it must be secret—for a time, at least."

Astonishment prevented Mr. Pennant's replying to this marvellous proposal for a few minutes, which seemed hours to Lord Penruddock, who was in earnest, and who expected instant and glad consent.

"My lord, forgive me if I misdoubted your honour," said Pennant at last, very slowly and considerately. "Daisy is worthy of your love, and would soon fit herself to any rank. If your lordship will tell the Earl first, I will put before her the distinction you propose for her; but I could not expect obedience from my own sons if I encouraged disobedience in another's. My sons!—we had looked forward to our Daisy marrying one of them."

"She is not betrothed?—not engaged?"

"Not as yet, my lord."

There was another silence, during which Mr. Pennant's happy face was clouded, and Lord Penruddock walked to a window, as if to think. The farmer looked after him, and wondered if he could be sincere; but knowing Daisy as he did, he believed her capable of inspiring the most romantic attachment, even in an earl's son, and he also feared she was ambitious. He was, indeed, much puzzled and distressed by the chain of events that so suddenly entangled him; but he was not cast down. He asked for direction silently from Him who can alone disentangle our perplexities, and when Lord Penruddock returned, he was better prepared to reply to him than he had been before. His heart had always warmed to this young man, who, although overbearing and hot-headed, had yet generous qualities, and who, under happier influences, might have been just and true.

"I will speak to my father, Mr. Pennant, and meanwhile you speak to Daisy. Tell her I must and will see her again alone. It will be her fault if you do not remain at Brynhafod;

and according as you use your influence over her, so shall I use mine over my father."

"I cannot influence her, my lord. If she loves you, as maybe she does, for she did not say to the contrary, her own heart will speak for you; if not, you would scarcely wish her for your wife."

"I should wish to make her love me, and would do it in spite of all obstacles. Tell her so, and that no power shall part us."

"There is a Power above that parts or makes one by a touch of His rod. Let us trust in Him, my lord."

"As you will. But you must act as well as trust, for on you and Daisy may hang the fate of your family, as well as mine; for I cannot live without her."

Mr. Pennant sighed heavily as he rose to depart. Lord Penruddock, by some unusual impulse, held out his hand, which the farmer grasped.

"God bless you, my lord, and guide us all aright!" he said, and his heart was so full that he could scarcely speak.

"Thank you, Pennant; I hope He will," was the reply, as the farmer departed, sadly and wearily.

Lord Penruddock was impulsive, and rarely waited to consider or weigh his actions, so he went at once in search of his father. He found him pacing his favourite walk outside his tower; wild rock and sea beneath, frowning turrets overhead. The Earl looked even more moody than usual; for, although he was rejoicing over the consummation of his long-resolved plans, he had not liked Pennant's words, "You have myrmidons who may." A breath destroys a coward's peace. He knew well enough that his tools might work against him. Still he was resolved to be rid of the Pennants, and to extirpate them, root and branch, from the soil. When, therefore, his son came to him with the preface that he had just seen Farmer Pennant, he was prepared to tell him that he was thankful to be nearly rid of him and his at last. Lord Penruddock joined him in his walk, which was much like pacing a deck, and after

his preliminary information, dashed into the subject next his heart. Hitherto, he thought, his father had yielded to his slightest wish—at any rate, he had appeared to do so—would he thwart him in this?

"You suggested the other day that I should marry," he began; "I think it would be as well, and I should like it."

"Ah! Lady Jane? An excellent match, and money to prop up these poor walls," returned the Earl, pausing in his walk.

"Some one infinitely more attractive than Lady Jane, my lord. I have lost my heart to a country maiden, and come as a suppliant for your consent."

"I guess. The heiress, Miss Hughes Hughes. They say she has fifty thousand pounds. Not so bad, Penruddock."

"Wrong again. I know you will disapprove; still, you will not send me to destruction by refusing."

The Earl glanced at his son, who was flushed and agitated in spite of his assurance.

"Some *mésalliance!*" he exclaimed, looking down again.

"No, my lord; a lady, I am sure. Beauty, education, and fascination——"

"Her name, Penruddock?"

"I do not know her proper surname; she is—she is an adopted child."

"Scarcely a wife for Lord Penruddock, apparently."

"She is an empress among women, my lord."

"Ha! ha! and you are unacquainted with her name. Where does she live? Has she money?

"She lives—hem! I fear she has no money."

"Ha! I thought so! Impossible! You must have money. Lady Jane for you, Sir George for Mona, and we should be well off. Where does this unknown live?"

"Not far off, my lord. At—at Brynhafod."

The word came heavily, like a cannon-ball; and as such it fell upon the Earl. Penruddock was terrified when he saw its effect. His father turned so livid that he thought he would

have fallen down in a fit. He took hold of his arm to support him, but he was shaken off.

"Not—that—foundling?" muttered the Earl at last.

"It is she, my lord."

"Curse her!—curse them all!"

Although that evil word was often on the Earl's lips, his son had never heard him use it before. The tone, even more than the word, startled him; for in those days oaths were not so uncommon as they happily are in these.

"My lord, remember that I love her," he exclaimed, passionately.

The Earl paced on, without heeding him, or speaking again, and Penruddock walked at his side. Up and down, up and down, while shadows flitted fantastically over the many-coloured cliffs and the dancing sea. They were both thinking of Daisy. The father's thoughts were deep and mysterious, the son's shallow and clear. At last the Earl spoke with a voice so altered that Penruddock was surprised. He had changed his tactics and his tone, and his son's mind was too superficial to understand him.

"You love the girl—well! Your mother and Mona fancy her also. Take a twelvemonth to consider; you know I never refused you anything. This is not much to ask, eh?"

"A year is a life. I could not wait. I should die."

"Six months, then. Absence for six months. Three with us in town, three abroad—anywhere."

"And then, my lord?"

"And then you shall have your way. But remember, I have no money—no money. Not a penny to spare. You won't like starvation, but you'll have to starve."

"Anything with her, my lord."

"Fool!" muttered the Earl, within his teeth. "But you'll see another girl in six months. You always do. Think more of money and less of love; the one is sterling, the other base. And this girl may be anybody—anybody."

"I may marry her in six months?"

"If you are in the same mind. Providing you name her to no one during that time, and keep your own secret. You must swear to do this. Make no mention of me. But you have been candid, and although I can never acknowledge her —by heavens, never !—you know I can refuse you nothing."

Little as Lord Penruddock suspected it, the Earl had been already apprised of this fancy for Daisy; but he had not imagined that his son could dream of marriage. Neither did he dream of it himself; but he found it easier to humour than aggravate him, which would, he was aware, only drive him to the act he contemplated, before his own plans were matured. He took him, therefore, into his study, where he extracted from him the promise to wait six months; and where Lord Penruddock extorted from the Earl a pledge that the Pennants should not be ejected during that period. Thus much effected, Penruddock walked gaily off, whistling a tune.

When he was gone the Earl gave vent to his suppressed passion, muttering aloud, from time to time, such sentences as these, interspersed with—

"Curses not loud but deep,"

"Saved for this! A dog trained for this! A ship wrecked for this! His wife! My daughter-in-law! A waif from the sea! I told her ladyship how it would be, but she humoured Mona! Isn't her disobedience enough? But she, at least, shall marry where the gold lies. The gold! A nameless, penniless, bare-faced peasant—a farmer's foundling—a tenant's brat—to become Countess of Craigavon? Never—never! She must be got rid of—she must, and, by heaven, she shall."

CHAPTER XXV.

CARAD TELLS DAISY.

WHEN David Pennant returned to the farm he sought Caradoc. He found him in the old schoolroom, which he had converted into a temporary surgery. This room stood apart from the house, having been once a sort of barn, which had been turned into a cosy, habitable place by the good farmer when Ap Adam was ejected from the vicarage. Here that scholar had taught his young friends and continued his own studies, and here had been projected and carried out the light on the Esgair. It had formerly been appropriated solely to Ap Adam, but of late Daisy had allured her Monad children to it on Sunday, and Caradoc had used it to see patients during the week. The peasants flocked to him for advice and medicine immediately after his return, and were just as ready to take his nostrums as they had been to take Ap Adam's herbs. Indeed, it was indifferent to them which leech they saw, provided they carried off some sort of drug with them. But Caradoc was clever and experienced, so his reputation grew rapidly, and his gratuitous services were claimed by patients who came from great distances, as such services usually are. "All work and no pay," laughed his father; but he was none the less willing that his son should heal the poor. And Caradoc's heart was so tender, his feelings were so quick, and his compassion for poverty and suffering so intense, that he desired nothing better than to study the human framework, with a view to mitigating human misery.

He was deep in some great medical work when his father

entered. He was seated on a high stool at a rough deal table. The whitewashed walls that inclosed him were lined with coarse shelves, covered with coarser geological specimens, while here and there odd volumes of all kinds of literature peeped out from amongst them. Old Pennant used to say that, but for Marget, the whole farm and its outhouses would have been a museum, but she wouldn't have "the old stones and bones" anywhere but in the schoolroom, and in Caradoc's sacred chamber. His medicine bottles were for the present guarded, like the books, by antediluvian relics, all of which he had to himself during Ap Adam's prolonged absence.

Mr. Pennant startled him from his study by the words,

"Carad, the Earl won't renew the lease. We are to leave the farm."

His father's heavy hand was laid on his shoulder, and when he glanced up he saw that he was much excited. He placed a chair for him, and begged him to sit down and explain. Mr. Pennant did so in few brief, strong, unmistakable words Caradoc was as much overcome by surprise and anger as his father had been; but, seeing his fiery state, he strove for calm.

"There are other farms as good, father, with far better landlords," he said, after a long pause.

"I tell you, boy, it will kill your grandfather and your mother!" cried the farmer, burying his head in his arms on the long deal table, and sobbing like a child.

Caradoc knelt down by his side, put his arms round him, and said cheerily,—

"They are stronger than you fancy, father. Remember we all stand or fall together; and think of our Welsh proverb, 'Union is strength.'"

"They will not even let us do that. Lord Penruddock wants our Daisy, and that will kill Michael too," said David Pennant, starting up again and facing his son.

Caradoc rose, and with some great struggle conquered the passionate impulse within, visible in his countenance. After a

momentary silence, laying one clenched hand on the table, the other on his father's shoulder, he said,—

"Michael, also, is stronger than you think, father. But what do you mean?"

Mr. Pennant recounted briefly, bitterly, excitedly, the conversation he had held with Lord Penruddock. He was so little himself that Caradoc almost fancied he had imagined it; but he soon found himself mistaken. The statements were too clear for hallucinations.

"Daisy must be left to her own decision, father, and not influenced by Lord Penruddock's promise to help us, provided she consent," said Caradoc, excitedly.

"Of course—of course. Do you think she loves him or Michael best?" asked his father.

"I cannot tell. Women love titles and riches," replied Caradoc, knitting his brows, and glancing on his book.

They calmed by degrees and went over and over what the Earl and Lord Penruddock had said, considering each point. They knew that the one hated, the other disliked them, simply because they had always been independent tenants; but they had not believed in the extent of their aversion before.

"Even if Lord Penruddock tell his father, he will never consent," exclaimed Caradoc suddenly.

"Then he will have her without it if he can," returned the farmer. "She must be told before she hear of the lease. You must tell her, Carad—I cannot."

"I!"

"Yes. You are young, and understand such matters: I have forgotten them. Are you sure it won't kill your mother, lad?"

The door opened, and Daisy entered.

"Here you are, after all! Truants! laggards!" she began, with smile and jest. "We have been seeking you everywhere, even to the hen-roost. But something is amiss. What is it? Father, you have been crying! Carad, what is the matter?"

She stood between father and son, looking from one to the other, her countenance changed from gay to grave.

"Tell her, Carad—tell her; I cannot," broke forth the farmer, rising hastily. "Eye of Day, thou art sure to do right, God helping thee; only—only—remember Michael."

"Father! what is it?" cried Daisy, as David Pennant passed her by, and left her and Caradoc alone together.

"Remember Michael!" echoed in Caradoc's heart, as he turned away and walked towards the shelves, to recover and steel himself for the task laid upon him.

When he believed himself prepared, he returned to Daisy. He was so white, and there was such a pain in his face, that she was frightened. But she was not one of those who give way at every slight alarm, for she had imbibed strength of mind with strength of body during her mountain life. So she laid her hand quietly on his arm, looked into his pale face, and asked again what had happened. Why did his cheeks flush suddenly at her slight touch, and his eyes so gleam when hers sought to fathom them, that her hand and appealing glance fell together? Alas! and is Caradoc, too, in love with Daisy? If so, he conceals it bravely.

"Sit down, Daisy," he said at last.

She sat down on a form near the table, and he seated himself by her side. He smiled sadly.

"These are our old places," he said.

"Yes; where you and the master taught me. What happy times those were!" she replied.

"You remember them, Daisy?"

"How could I forget them? Can you recall how you strove to teach me Latin declensions, when the master was irritable, and I inattentive, by assuring me that Lady Jane Grey was a classical scholar? and how you rewarded me, when they were learnt, by letting me ride your pony, or climb the cliffs with you in search of fossils? and how you used to prompt me, when father set me on the table, to repeat Welsh or English poetry to every one who came in? Oh, Carad! I owe everything to you, even my life. Our Heavenly Father made you the instrument of saving that."

"Nay, Daisy; it was Gwylfa."

"But you taught him, and it was to you he gave me. Oh, Carad! it has been strange and lonely without you."

"Hush, Daisy! hush!"

As Caradoc uttered these words he touched Daisy's arm lightly, and again their eyes met. They were full of that tender feeling which the recollection of a happy past calls forth, and as they sat, for the moment, side by side, that youthful past seemed present, and they were children again. But Caradoc's "Hush!" was prompted by the recollection of what he had to tell, and his brotherly love for Michael. He dared not love Daisy other than as friend or brother. And yet he felt the unutterable charm of her dignified innocence, her guileless simplicity, her inborn taste and ladyhood, her pure, exceeding beauty. They were silent a moment. Daisy's eyes were cast down on the hands folded on her lap, and her graceful head and flushed cheek were bent. Caradoc, his elbow on the table, his head on his hand, gazed upon her till his pale face also flushed, and he exclaimed, involuntarily, with a heavy sigh, "Oh, Daisy! that happy past is past."

She glanced up quickly, and the pained expression of his face recalled her father's hasty exit, and his "Remember Michael!"

"What is it, Carad?" she said, controlling some emotion, and moving to a little distance down the long form.

"It is—oh! why did father commission me to tell you? Still—you may—be glad, Daisy. Would you like to be Countess of Craigavon? Would you care to have lands, and wealth, and power? Would you desire to exchange our humble lot for something grander?"

"This is of the mythology, Carad. I would be rich, if I could dispense my riches; powerful, if I could relieve the oppressed; but never Countess of Craigavon. I would not exchange my happy life for her ladyship's for all the grandeur of the world; nor this dear schoolroom for the gloomy one of Lady Mona; nor this bright farmstead for the dark Castle. But why do you waste time in vain questions, when there

seems to be real anxiety somewhere? What did father bid you say to me?"

"That Lord Penruddock has declared to him that——"

Here he paused; and Daisy's colour deepened as she turned away from him and moved still farther down the form.

"I understand," she said, somewhat coldly.

"And what is he to say?" asked Caradoc, in a deep, hoarse, hesitating voice.

"That I have already given my answer to Lord Penruddock," she replied, with a sort of brusque decision.

Caradoc gained courage when she no longer faced him, and gave his message resolutely and rapidly, to which she listened without comment or exclamation.

"Daisy, as—as—your brother, I am bound to tell you what his lordship says. He asks for my father's countenance to marry you wheresoever he and you will. He intends to gain the Earl's consent, who refuses him nothing. He seems honourable and straightforward beyond what——I mean, he is sincere in his proposal, and father wishes you to be told exactly what it is. I am a sad bungler, but I have obeyed him. It is for you to decide."

When Caradoc paused there was silence between the two. Daisy broke it. Turning slowly towards him, with a pale, stern face and cold manner, she said, half scornfully,—

"And what is your advice, my *brother?*"

"That you follow the impulse of your heart," replied Caradoc, very gently—for he had never seen her look so before.

"My heart!" she repeated, a tear starting to her eye. "What is father's advice?—does he wish so to dispose of me?"

"Not if he meant the words he uttered as he left this room," replied Caradoc, with a strong effort at self-control.

He believed that Daisy had loved Michael, and was loved by him; yet he had watched her more than once when speaking to Lord Penruddock, until he had almost fancied that the glamour of rank, manners, admiration, compliments, and the ready ease acquired by travel, had so far influenced her as to

transfer her affections from his brother to the man of the world. Of himself he did not dare to think. Daisy knew that he alluded to Mr. Pennant's "Remember Michael," and, whatever her feelings, spoke accordingly.

"I must have time to think, and I will speak to Lord Penruddock myself," she said, with a sort of majestic calm unusual to her. "There is something that I do not understand in all this; but I thank you, Carad, for your interest in me and—his lordship."

Their eyes met. Hers were indignant, his reproachful; but neither understood the other, and each felt, intuitively, that it was well the other did not know what was passing below the surface.

"Mother is waiting supper," she said, and left the schoolroom, followed by Caradoc.

They found a sorrowful party in the hall, for David Pennant had told his family of the Earl's resolution concerning the lease. He was seated near his wife in the chimney-corner, trying to comfort her, for she was sobbing audibly. The old farmer had covered his face with his hands, and Michael was standing by his side. Daisy, seeing this as she entered, retreated to the passage, and asked Caradoc for an explanation. All unkind feeling vanished, and she listened breathlessly while he gave it.

"Leave Brynhafod! Not renew the lease!" she exclaimed, "and you rightful inheritors of the land! I will see Lord Penruddock, and represent it to him."

She little knew the bargain he sought to make; and Caradoc felt that she understood her influence over his lordship. They went together into the hall. Michael looked at them sorrowfully, as he stood between his grandfather and the untasted meal. Daisy was at the old man's other side instantly; her arms round his neck, her lips pressed to his white head.

"Don't grieve, dear," she said.

On which the venerable face was uncovered, and smiled serenely upon her.

"The cup that my Heavenly Father hath given us, shall we not drink it?" he said, reverently. "I was but asking that His strength might be perfected in our weakness, my Eye of Day."

Daisy's tears fell on the white head, but she also strove to smile.

"The Lord is sufficient for us, grandfather," she said.

Upon which he turned towards his son and daughter-in-law, and repeated the text, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast Thou ordained strength."

David Pennant looked up wistfully at Daisy, and seeing that she was near Michael, also smiled. Then he turned to his wife, and said, "Now, mother, we have shed tears enough. Let us rejoice that we have three children readier to renounce the loaves and fishes than we are."

"They don't know—they don't know," sobbed Mrs. Pennant.

It was now Caradoc's turn to comfort. He went to his mother from his post of observation near the door, and with a sort of gentle decision peculiar to him, said, as he bent over her, "Mother, you must not make yourself ill, for all our sakes. What should we do if you were laid up again? You will have more work than ever if I stay in the country."

"You will not go away, then, Carad?" cried Mrs. Pennant, eagerly, looking at him through many tears.

"Certainly not, dear mother," was the reply.

The words stayed the grief instantly. Caradoc had been undecided hitherto, but under this sudden pressure of difficulty his mind was quickly made up. The joy was greater than the sorrow. The simple woman brushed the tears from her eyes, and, putting her hand into her husband's, said, with a final sob, "There's good our Carad is! I was thinking he wouldn't have the heart to leave us."

And so the young consoled the old.

Here Marget made her appearance with some salad. "Name o' goodness! what's the matter? There's the fried potatoes as cold as if they had never been in the pan, and they browned as sleek as a cow's back. And the mistress has

been crying again; as if there wasn't salt water enough near by without her pouring it out of her eyes. If you are letting her cry, all of you, and making her ill again, all I can say is you ought to be knowing better."

"Hush, Marget, *fach!* we are in some trouble," interrupted the old farmer.

"Trouble! Why, they're all here! There's Carad, and Michael, and Daisy," cried Marget, in alarm, looking round.

They told her what had occurred. She was stupified for a moment, and let the dish she held fall.

"That's what you get now for telling one of a sudden," she remarked solemnly, pointing to the shards. "But 'tis no good pining over a broken dish; we must get another. And 'tis no good lamenting over this old farm, as is colder than a barn when the winnowing's going on, and like to be blown down any night in the year, 'specially o' winter. We must get another. There's Coed Bach to let, with Thomas Plâs for landlord—as snug a farm as you'd be seeing, and as warm as a cake in an oven."

They all laughed at the similitude; for Coed Bach was situated in a hollow, and surrounded by trees. It was also in another district, far from the sea.

"Too warm by half, and no sea, Marget," said Daisy.

"Sea, indeed, Miss, *fach!* We've had enough of that, and them horrible wrecks besides," said Marget.

Caradoc and Daisy looked at one another, remembering the Esgair. David Pennant remarked that there would be time enough to discuss the future, and that they had better have some supper. They sat down—Daisy, as usual, between the old man and Michael, Caradoc by his mother. The meal was silent and sad, every one thinking his own thoughts, and saying little. Mrs. Pennant was more cheerful than the rest, for her mind never overleaped the present, and she felt that she had her dearest son. He, probably, realized the position more fully than the others, knowing all, which no one else did. And the loss of the farm seemed comparatively insignificant to

him in comparison with the complications that must arise, let Daisy decide as she would. On one side the wrathful Earl and the impetuous Penruddock; on the other the sensitive Michael and his anxious parents. Then, what of Daisy?—what of himself?

CHAPTER XXVI.

PARTINGS.

A NOTE arrived from Lord Penruddock, appointing a meeting with Mr. David Pennant at Brynhafod. In his impatience he followed it almost immediately, while a messenger was sent in search of the farmer. It was morning when he arrived, and he was struck with the beauty of the prospect from the parlour, where he waited awhile alone. The window was open, and the perfume of the white pink wafted in, while the distant murmur of waves was heard. He was surprised at the tasteful simplicity and cheerfulness of the room, and attributed them, not unjustly, to Daisy. There were nosegays everywhere, but one of wild flowers attracted him most. It was composed chiefly of heather and harebells, and arranged in an old-fashioned china dish of great value. He extracted one or two, and placed them in his button-hole. Then he glanced at the titles of some books on a mahogany shelf, and raised his eyebrows as he saw they were chiefly classics, whether in Welsh, English, or Latin. The polished oak floor and furniture pleased his taste, and he pictured Daisy seated at the harp in the corner of the room, until he almost fancied himself in some noble abode, instead of that of one of his father's tenants. While his imagination was thus kindled by thoughts of Daisy, and his mind set on obtaining her, either by consent or stratagem, the door slowly opened, and she appeared. She curtseyed as usual, and stood between the door and window, looking like the picture he had supposed. She left him no time for greeting, but spoke at once, with her customary fearless simplicity.

"My lord, I would speak to you before father comes. I have been told of the honour you have again shown me, and of the falling in of the lease. Did you promise to help father to remain here, if—if—I consented to your request?"

This straightforward question embarrassed Lord Penruddock, and startled him into an involuntary affirmative.

"Then, my lord, you took an ungenerous advantage of our distress. I was not told of this, but I suspected it from the manner of my father and brother. May I ask your lordship exactly what you mean and wish?"

Lord Penruddock hesitated as he replied.

"You know what I wish, Daisy."

"I know what you said to me, my lord; but at that time you had no intention of speaking to my father. On the contrary, you desired secrecy. His lordship, the Earl, would scarcely countenance this—unequal, impossible . . . ."

Daisy paused.

"My father refuses me nothing, He almost promises his consent if I wait awhile to prove myself. He little knows the depth and intensity of my love, or perhaps he would not be so conciliating. However, I will strive for patience, if you will give me hope. I shall do some rash thing if you refuse; for, indeed, your presence is my only heaven on earth—your voice my hymn—your——"

"Hush! my lord, if you please. I am not used to hear such words addressed to a poor mortal. But I would know, if what you say is true, whether it would make you grant me a favour."

"You have but to ask. I, and all I have, is yours."

"Nay, my lord; I only want you to intercede with the Earl to renew our lease of Brynhafod. If, as you say, he refuses you nothing, he will assuredly do this for your lordship."

"If you marry me at once—to-day, to-morrow—I swear to accomplish your wish."

"That I cannot do, my lord."

"When does the lease expire?"

"At Michaelmas, my lord."

"Before then I shall be back. I shall go away just to make believe that I am absent, and return unexpectedly in a few months at most."

"You will not deceive your father, my lord?"

"Ah, my simplest of Daisies, all is fair in love. He will deceive me, if he can, and send you all off before Michaelmas; so if I am to do your pleasure, I must be on the spot; and you, my sweet queen, must wait for me. We must circumvent the Earl."

"Not so, my lord; you must honour him."

"Honour *him!* I will swear to honour you, if that will please you."

Daisy's face showed marked displeasure; and Lord Penruddock changed his tone to one of persuasion.

"You shall make of me what you will, if only you will love me."

"That I cannot promise, my lord."

"You will, at least, await my return? You will engage yourself to no one else—love no one else?"

He saw that her face flushed, but she answered with remarkable self-possession,—

"I can make no promises, my lord, and ask for none. If you will do a just and righteous act by prevailing on the Earl to renew the lease, your conscience will be your reward. I am not likely to be engaged to any one in so short a space, and should not desire it. But I pray to God to guide my life, as He miraculously saved it."

Her voice faltered a little, and nothing but her simple purity restrained Lord Penruddock from an outburst of fiery passion. As it was, he went close to her, standing, as she still was, near the window, and, seizing her hand, kissed it, exclaiming, "Oh, Daisy! if only I had been educated in your school, perhaps you might have loved and saved me."

She was touched by the pathos of his words, and said, as she withdrew her hand,—

"I will pray for you, my lord, and—and for Lady Mona. Take care of her ladyship; watch over her. And, oh! pray for yourself."

"I will try, if you will wait for me; and I will strive to pacify the Earl. You are sure you do not hate me?"

"No, my lord. Why should I?"

"Because I have hated those you love best. But when my passion calms, I am less bad than I seem—less haughty and revengeful."

"So we all think, my lord; and grandfather sometimes prays that you may be made a God-fearing, righteous man."

"I am obliged to him. And you?"

"I ask God to incline your heart towards the poor sailors, and others, wrecked, as I was, on your lordship's property."

"You shall do for them what you will when you are Countess of Craigavon, and I may then, perhaps, be able to root out the wreckers. Give me something of yours to console me during my forced absence."

Daisy considered a moment. Then she walked deliberately to the bookshelf and took down a small Bible. She carried it to him, and said,—

"Will you receive this, my lord? It is my very own."

He took it, opened it, and saw the words "Daisy Pennant" on the flyleaf. His excited and somewhat sarcastic expression changed to momentary seriousness.

"Thank you. Must I read it?"

"If you please, my lord."

"For your sake?"

"For your own. It is the Word of God."

At that moment David Pennant passed the window. Without another word, and to Daisy's inexpressible distress, Lord Penruddock put his arm round her, kissed her on the forehead, and left the room.

CHAPTER XXVII

DAISY'S TEARS.

DAVID PENNANT found Daisy in tears. He drew from her, in part only, what had passed between her and Lord Penruddock. There was something in her manner, and, above all, her tears, that led the worthy farmer to suspect that after all she liked her noble lover; and although it made him hot and angry, he was not surprised. He was too proud, however, to sound the depths of her heart, or again to mention Michael. Neither did he discover that Daisy had sought the interview with his lordship in order to inquire concerning the lease, and that she had entreated him to intercede with the Earl. All that he ascertained was that she had made no promise.

"It was forward of you, my dear, to seek his lordship, when he came to see me by his own appointment," he said angrily.

"I did not mean it so, father," she replied.

Her submissive manner softened him.

"Did he leave any message for me?" he asked.

"None, father. But he said he should be back in a few months."

"We had better say nothing of all this to any one but Carad. He knows about it already, and it would only cause gossip. I daresay there will be talk enough when Marget knows you have been closeted with his lordship. She has already set the whole country ablaze with the news that we are to leave the farm."

"Oh! father, but perhaps we shall not leave it."

"I incline to think we shall. I am not going to be beholden to any man, whether earl or squire, while I have stock and crop for another holding."

A well-known footstep sounded in the passage, and Daisy started and brushed away her tears. In another moment Caradoc came in, followed by Sir George Walpole. He had been to the Castle professionally, had met Sir George, who had turned and walked with him, and had finally expressed a wish to "bid good-bye to his pretty sister, in whom he felt much interested." Caradoc wondered whether Daisy had gained another aristocratic admirer, as he led the gallant General to the farm, and began to wish that the child he had borne from the waves had grown up less beautiful and attractive. Both he and Sir George perceived the tears, as well as the heightened complexion of the farmer. However, they made the best of it, and Sir George, who was a good talker, engaged them all in conversation or interpretation. Uncle Toby himself was not fonder of fighting his battles over and over with Corporal Trim than was Sir George. But he saw there was something amiss, and suddenly pausing in the midst of an inquiry concerning Ap Adam's residence at the farm, he turned to Daisy and asked what it was.

"I never saw a tear in a lady's eye without feeling disposed to wipe it away," he said kindly. "I am an old soldier, and go at once to the point."

Daisy smiled, but Caradoc thought Sir George impertinent, and answered for her.

"We are all anxious just now, sir. Our lease of this farm expires at Michaelmas, and the Earl means to take it into his own hands."

"How many years have you held it?"

"Since long before the Earl possessed the Castle."

This was said with a sort of proud independence not lost on Sir George.

"That seems hard," he said. "I still think your friend Ap Adam must be my friend, and for his sake, and out of gratitude

for your kindness to him, should like to be of use to you and your family. I have, alas! neither wife nor child, and yet I have more money than thousands who have families—such is the will of Providence, though I don't understand it. If money can help your good father, one of you must let me know. I am fond of young people, particularly when they are not conceited, and although you are a sufficiently good-looking pair, I have discovered no special marks of vanity as yet. Your confounded guttural tongue prevents my saying this to your father, but you can explain. If you would like an appointment as army surgeon, let me know. You are just the man for one."

Sir George paused for an answer, but Caradoc had none ready. He would have liked the proposed post, but could not accept it.

"Mother wishes Carad to live at home, and he never thinks of himself," rejoined Daisy, instead.

"My young friend, I honour you!" cried Sir George. "You will never repent any sacrifice you make for your parents. Good-bye!"

He grasped Caradoc's hand, while tears returned to Daisy's eyes.

"God bless you, my dear," he said to her, and the tears fell on his hand as he took hers.

She was not given to crying, and could only account for her emotion by the recollection of her interview with Lord Penruddock.

"It is not good-bye for ever, sir?" she said.

"I trust not. I shall probably be at the Castle again some day. Lord Craigavon has invited me, and the ladies—the Countess at least—seconded the invitation. I accompany them to London to-morrow. Tell your friend Ap Adam that, if he is the person I think him, I shall hope to hear from him, and, under any circumstances, I shall depend on your letting me know when he returns to you. Good-bye again."

All this time Sir George held Daisy's hand, and looked at

her with a sort of lingering tenderness. She made no effort to withdraw it, feeling instinctively that the act was merely of kindly interest; and when he left the farm, accompanied by Mr. Pennant and his son, she stood at the window to watch him out of sight.

"Perhaps when he comes again we shall have left this dear home, and then I shall never see him more!" she sighed.

Her reverie was interrupted by the entrance of Mr. Tudor. He brought a note from Miss Manent to her, and seemed in much perplexity. He begged her to read it at once, and she did so. It was to the effect that Lady Mona had procured Miss Manent a situation at Sir Shenkin Thomas's, of Plâs, and that she would not, therefore, be obliged to leave "her dear Wales." She had a few weeks to spare before she began her new life, and she would, if convenient, accept Mrs. Pennant's kind invitation, and spend them at Brynhafod.

"I am so glad, are not you?" was Daisy's first exclamation; and then she remembered Lady Mona's threatened elopement, and her countenance fell.

"I feared it would be impossible, now that you are all in such trouble about the lease," said Mr. Tudor, himself always in trouble about something or other. "I would ask my mother to invite her, but——"

"I am quite sure she can come here. We shall all be pleased to see her. Shall we not, father?" returned Daisy, as David Pennant entered.

The keynote of Daisy's hospitality was struck as soon as he had heard the news.

"Of course she can come. There's plenty of room, even if the Master returns, and old Madoc comes. The Earl has turned off Madoc, and liberally appointed Michael to reign in his stead. He had forgotten that he had turned us out, too. Now's your time, parson. You can marry her straight off from this house, and I'll set to work on the vicarage, in spite of the Earl. Daisy shall be bridesmaid, Carad best man, and I'll give her away. I'll be bound the Earl was glad to be saved

the expense of her journey to London, and didn't propose to pension her for her services."

"I think he was," said Mr. Tudor, thoughtfully. "And they none of them seemed to be sorry to part with her, although she has been so devoted to them."

"Neither would they be sorry to part with you, if you were to leave them to-morrow," replied David. "They're not what you may call an affectionate family. Take courage, man, and marry the young woman out-and-out. Let us all show the Earl we can live without him. We can find another farm, you a wife, Miss Manent a husband, old Madoc a home, your brother, if needs be, employment, without his lordship's aid, and we will take an unfair advantage of him, and do it while he's away."

Mr. Tudor seemed struck with this idea. He felt as if he could really "take courage," when the grim, uncompromising Earl was not near. And Mr. Pennant forgot his own troubles in the pleasant hope of helping others.

"Mother! mother! come here!" he called, with stentorian vigour, from the passage.

When Mrs. Pennant came, looking scared by the sudden summons, she was astonished at the change in her husband's face.

"Has the Earl renewed the lease?" she asked.

"No; but we're going to have a wedding. A wedding!" he replied.

"Mr. Pennant, pray don't be so rash. I haven't even asked her," whispered Mr. Tudor, laying hold of the farmer's coat-tails.

"Then you must; and on my deed, you shall have the parlour all to yourselves. Mother! Daisy! don't let them be interrupted. I'll go and see about the vicarage this minute, while you write and tell her to come. Let go my coat-tails, there's a good boy, and I promise you as jolly a wedding as you ever had in your life."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

LONDON AT LAST.

A JOURNEY to London had been for years an incubus to the Earl; it became real at last. He had made all his arrangements, and calculated the expenses to a fraction. He intended to take as few servants as possible with him, and to leave those who remained at the Castle on board wages. He heard, therefore, with satisfaction, that Lady Mona was wise enough to propose that a situation in the country should be found for Miss Manent, and that Morris should pay a visit to her friends; while her ladyship would either content herself with her mother's maid, or procure a temporary attendant in town. The situation was found without difficulty, and the Earl gave orders that Miss Manent should be properly forwarded to Sir Shenkin Thomas's, of Plâs, as soon as he and his family were *en route* for town; and that Morris should be sent to her friends. Miss Manent was pleased with this arrangement, for she was of that unambitious turn of mind that is content to leave well-enough alone; and although her "well-enough" had not been over good, she still desired nothing better. Indeed, she had been so many years at the Castle that she dreaded leaving it as much as if she really loved it; and she was, besides, fond of Wales. Morris, on the contrary, who had been building her hopes of advancement, pleasure, and even matrimony, on the visit to London, was grievously disappointed. But the Earl's fiat went forth, and there was no appeal.

His lordship was very busy on the eve of his departure. He examined the Castle from dungeon to turret, and there

was a great sound of the grating of keys in rusty locks. In short, every place was hermetically sealed that did not appertain to the apartments in which the family actually lived, and these he meditated closing after him. He concluded his inspection by a solitary ride over that portion of his property immediately surrounding the Castle, during which he called at the vicarage and Aran Tower. He had an interview with his bailiff and former gamekeeper at these respective places. He told the former that he did not intend to begin the restoration of the vicarage until his return from London, and that he was to keep possession of it; and with the latter he was closeted a long time.

There was a stable at the Tower where he was in the habit of putting up his horse, so that he felt comfortable concerning that much-used beast. The Earl was fond of riding, and was frequently on horseback at unseasonable hours, so that not only Evan the Tower, but the peasants generally, were accustomed to his being abroad even at midnight. The latter whispered among themselves that his lordship had a troubled spirit, and they even went so far as to say that when he went up to the top of the Tower, and sat there, he received strange visitants. But then the peasantry were superstitious, and believed as much in the unseen as the seen.

On the evening in question, his lordship toiled up to his observatory to scan earth, sea, and sky through his telescopes. Then, as he again descended, he peered into the dark rooms in the centre of the Tower, appropriated for the storing away of wreckage, carefully locking them after him; and finally summoned Evan to a small room on the basement, appropriated to his own use. It was a dark den, lighted only by a narrow grated casement, whence little but ocean was visible. The Earl sat with his back to the window, and Evan faced it, standing.

"You must keep a sharper look out," began his lordship. "The wreckers get an undue share. There must have been wrecks somewhere down the coast, but nothing has been brought in. I say you are idle."

"Indeed, my lord, I do nothing else but look through the glasses," said Evan, humbly. "But since the witches have lighted the fire on the Esgair, scarce a vessel comes within sight at night. My belief is that they all get off."

"You will go every night to the Cader y Witch, until you find out what that light is. I may be back sooner than you expect, and this must be done while I am away—immediately, indeed."

"Oh! my lord. Please, my lord! On my deed, my lord, I couldn't be going there for all the wealth in this here place."

"You must! That light shall be put out."

"For mercy's sake, my lord, don't send me. I'm lame ever since I went to look for my Lord Penruddock's guinea. I should slip into the sea. I shouldn't so much as reach the witches. And if I did—oh! bless your heart, my lord! they'd make away with me. They're dancing there all night. The fishermen are seeing them. Sometimes they're as thick as sea-gulls on the rock, all in black and red, men-witches and women-witches my lord; and black dogs, and cats, and tall hats, and sticks as big as trees; and they no more mind the waves, nor the winds, nor the lightning, than they would so many hares or rabbits, my lord. Send the parson, my lord, he's the man to see to it; not a poor lame, old, grey-headed, old——"

"Coward!" supplemented the Earl. "You must go. Would you send me?"

"Oh! no, my lord, unless you are liking to go. What's the good of risking your precious life, my lord? And mine—well, now, sure it's of use to myself, if to nobody else, and the witches won't bear no interference. They'd as soon be taking yours as mine, my lord; they've no respect of persons."

"You—will—put—out—that—light!"

As the Earl uttered those six words deliberately, Evan fell on his knees in abject terror, and clasped his hands. The Earl rose, and Evan laid hold of him. "For goodness' sake! for pity's sake, my lord! I should die first!"

But the inflexible Earl shook him off, put him, screaming

still, out of the room, locked the door, and went to the stable for his horse.

It may be mentioned here that the Earl had often sighted the Esgair of an evening through his telescopes, and had more than once fancied that he saw a dim figure. But Caradoc had so laid his plans as to approach the rock from the side not facing the Tower, and, therefore, if he, Ap Adam, or Daisy had been espied, it was by some mischance.

The following morning there was, as may be supposed, a great stir at the Castle, and the Earl had much to do. It would take three weeks, at least, for him, his family, and suite, to travel post to London; and he managed every detail himself. The coroneted coach-and-four stood long in the court, while imperials and boxes were heaped upon it, and the other carriages were not less delayed and weighted.

"Her ladyship might as well have put the Castle on wheels," he grumbled, more than once, as package after package appeared.

The Countess and Lady Mona were, however, seated at last. The Earl and Sir George Walpole were to face them. Lord Penruddock declined, positively, to make one of the family party, preferring a seat on the box—in the rumble—in another carriage—or anywhere else. Every one in anywise connected with the establishment was there to see the *cortége* set out. Mr. Tudor was at the great door, Miss Manent at a humble distance in the hall, the servants scattered about in the court, and a crowd of tenants, labourers, and retainers without, lining the drive.

Sir George Walpole appeared almost as busy as the Earl. Not only was he helping in the general confusion, but he was consoling such servants as were left behind by what seemed unlimited vales. More than once the Earl whispered to him to hold his hand—for nothing escaped him,—but none the less did the rich nabob distribute. Miss Manent came in for her part. Sir George had seen her once or twice with Lady Mona, and, scarcely knowing whether she was friend or companion, had spoken pleasantly to her. Seeing her with tears in her

eyes, he went to her, and, with his usual loquacious courtesy, told her that he wished to give her a wedding present—for, of course, she would get married.

"You must buy it yourself, for I should not know what to get," he said, forcing a ten-pound note into her hand, and shaking it.

We need not wonder that her tears fell down.

"Will you see that Miss Manent is properly sent to Plâs?" said the Earl to Mr. Tudor. "Sir George, will you get in—opposite my daughter? Are you all ready at last?" he added, grimly, to his following.

They were all ready. The two smart post-boys, with their blue jackets and yellow breeches, flourished their whips, and the liveried and powdered footmen mounted.

"Lock the great door, and keep the key till I return, Tudor," said the Earl, touching the vicar's hand with two fingers. "Where is Penruddock?"

"Here, my lord!" shouted Lord Penruddock, from the top of a large barouche containing domestics, male and female. "I shall drive to Craigavon, where the posters await us."

When the Earl was in, Miss Manent ventured to the door. Lady Mona, looking very pale and very handsome, kissed her hand to her, and the Countess languidly waved hers. Miss Manent treasured those farewell salutations in her memory to the last day of her life.

"Write and tell me how you like Plâs," said Lady Mona.

"Is she going into a place?" asked Sir George.

"To a situation as governess," replied Lady Mona.

"Lock and bar the doors and gates. I shall not let Brynhafod, nor restore the vicarage, at present; and I hold you responsible during my absence," whispered the Earl to Mr. Tudor.

With these words the four ill-restrained greys started, prancing through the court and portcullis in lordly fashion. The other carriages followed, and thus the fruition of the Lady Mona's desires commenced. Once more she nodded to Miss Manent, who stood with Mr. Tudor in the court to watch the

procession until it disappeared amongst the trees in the centre of the promontory. A cheer from the spectators outside followed the last carriage, which was taken up by the domestics within the court, and a sense of relief fell on every soul as the Earl of Craigavon departed from his castle.

"Sit down here a few minutes," said Mr. Tudor to Miss Manent, as they returned to the hall.

She obeyed, hastily brushing off a tear.

"You, at least, have no cause for grief," he said.

"This has been my home for so many years!" she sighed.

"Home! I wish I could offer you a permanent one," he rejoined, impulsively for him.

"You!" she exclaimed, scarcely understanding him.

"Yes, if you would accept it. I have watched your patient endurance until I have longed to end it, if you would let me; but I seem myself harassed more and more. I should not have spoken now, did you not seem unhappy, and alone. Perhaps it may console you to know that you have one friend who desires to be to you nearer and dearer than all the world besides."

Miss Manent glanced at him with a look of intense surprise, and the words, "You, Mr. Tudor—and—me!"

"You are not offended? I have loved you long, and desired to ask you to be my wife."

She covered her face with her hands, and burst into tears. The emotion, partly suppressed, ot sorrow gave way before the sudden joy. She could not believe that she, the friendless orphan, was the chosen of this man, whom she reverenced as the kindest and best she had ever known, and whom she would have loved had she dared. He saw that she could not speak, and did not venture to approach near to her, because there were servants about. They sat apart, with a marble pillar between them, and their voices were low. He was timid to a fault, she scarcely more resolute, both having been cowed by circumstances stronger than they.

"Don't give way, dear Miss Manent," he said, humbly, moving irresolutely on the coroneted oak chair, and grating

the tesselated pavement. "We shall be observed; and the Earl has left his myrmidons behind him. You are going to Brynhafod, and there we may speak unheard; only I wished to say this first, because the Pennants are impulsive, and care for no man. If you love me ever so little, could you be content to wait?"

"Patiently—gladly—joyously," she whispered, her tears still flowing.

"I dare not defy the Earl, as Mr. Pennant wishes, for my brother's situation and my mother's livelihood may depend upon it. I cannot eject the bailiff from the vicarage, for I owe the living to the Earl. I could scarcely venture to marry to displease him, lest he should visit it upon others."

"You must not—he is so powerful!" breathed Miss Manent.

"And yet I know I am a coward!" exclaimed the parson, rising suddenly, and leaning against the pillar close to her.

Footsteps were heard hard by.

"Will you walk to Brynhafod, and allow me to send your boxes after you?" he asked aloud, without looking round. "The Earl has commissioned me to see the remaining doors locked."

"If you please," she replied, rising and glancing up at him, surprised by his change of manner.

Turning, she encountered Morris.

"Good-bye, Miss Manent. I am just going on my visit, and I suppose you will be leaving your *situation?*" said that worthy, emphasizing the last word.

"Miss Manent is going to Brynhafod, and probably to my mother's afterwards," said Mr. Tudor, who could be decided enough sometimes.

"Oh, indeed!" said the supercilious Abigail.

"Will you come with me, Mrs. Morris?" asked Miss Manent, trembling lest she should have overheard the previous conversation.

They went away together, leaving Mr. Tudor to the disagreeable office of locking the great door. Miss Manent's

step was light as she ran up the big staircase, and down the corridors to her old schoolroom—hers no longer. Had she not a vicarage and love in the dim perspective? Was there not hope below all her Pandora's box of troubles?

"I have worked you these trifles, if you will accept them," she said cheerily, taking a pair of screens from a mass of articles in bead and tapestry. "I wish I could afford to offer you a handsomer remembrance."

"And sure I am obliged to you. They are sweetly pretty!" returned Morris, surprised into civility by the gift.

Then Miss Manent held out her hand, and they separated.

When Morris was gone she gathered the other articles into a reticule, and with a strange light in her eyes, and heightened complexion, went, hesitating, to the housekeeper's room, and there distributed them to the servants who remained at the Castle.

"They are not worth much, but they are my own work," she said, with a humility that was not quite so humble as it had been; for was there not that vista in the distance?

Her pretty gifts were much admired and gratefully received by those who had sometimes pitied and been kind to the lonely governess.

"And, indeed, there's sorry I am that you're going!" said the Welsh housemaid who had waited upon her, as Miss Manent handed her an elaborate toilette pincushion.

Having shaken hands timidly with these people, who might some day be her parishioners, she returned to her apartments. Her small possessions were carefully packed, and she asked her friend, the housemaid, who had followed her, to watch over them until they were despatched. The consciousness that Mr. Tudor had promised to see to them sent a glow to her cheek, although she was too prudent and shy to confide that fact to her companion. The Earl had paid her what was due to her, and the ladies had made her some trifling presents; and thus, after fifteen years' service, she left inhospitable Craigavon Castle for hospitable Brynhafod—and left it with tears in her gentle eyes.

CHAPTER XXIX.

SICKNESS AT THE FARM.

AT the farm, speculations touching the Vicar's wedding, and even grief at the prospect of change, were overwhelmed by the sudden illness of Michael. He was taken in the field with that terrible premonitory symptom—the bursting of a small blood-vessel. Happily Caradoc was at home, and remedies were at hand, so that he was at once attended to. But the general anxiety was great. Mrs. Pennant gave way to her old nervous weakness when she saw him led into the house by one of the men, pale and very feeble; and, but for Daisy, she would have sadly excited him. While Caradoc got him to bed, and administered the proper remedies, aided by Marget, Daisy tried to soothe his mother.

"This trouble was too much for him. He will be the next —he will be the next!" was Mrs. Pennant's cry.

"Carad says it is a trifling seizure, dear mother," argued Daisy, herself pale and terrified.

"They all began so," moaned Mrs. Pennant. "Why don't father and grandfather come?"

Daisy did not dare to say that they had ridden over to look at Coed Bach farm.

Thanks to Caradoc's prompt measures, and the mercy of their Heavenly Father, however, Michael was soon relieved, and able to see his mother and Daisy.

"Only a few minutes, mother," said Caradoc, cheerfully, when they had entered his room. "If he is kept quiet to-day he will be better to-morrow. He mustn't talk."

"And that Miss Manent coming!" muttered Marget.

Michael was taken ill just before the Earl's departure, and preparations for Miss Manent were in progress. As he lay on his bed, he looked so delicate that it seemed wonderful how he had managed to keep up so long. He had never, voluntarily, given way before, and would not have done so now but for the accident already mentioned, caused, humanly speaking, by over-straining, in extricating a sheep from a precipitous place into which it had fallen.

"I am well now, mother, thanks to Carad," he whispered, looking from Mrs. Pennant to Daisy, and smiling.

His cheeks were flushed and his eyes bright, so the anxious women were fain to believe his words. Caradoc's skill, decision, and tact were soon apparent, for he ordered quiet, and asked Daisy to be nurse.

"You and Marget will have to make some of your famous jellies and custards to feed him up, while Daisy and I see that he swallows them," he said to his mother. "I think we can manage him amongst us now we have him on his back for a few days."

"And Monad?" whispered Michael.

"We will send Mr. Tudor to preach there. The Earl will have left by this time," replied Caradoc, significantly.

He then took his mother from the room, beckoning to Marget to follow, and left Michael and Daisy together.

"You must not talk. Read him to sleep, Daisy," he said, with his loving, lingering smile.

Then he reasoned Mrs. Pennant into comparative quiet, though a sob and the words, "He's sure to go; they all do," escaped from time to time.

However, distraction and occupation soon arrived in the person of Miss Manent. Since her acquaintance with the family at the farm, this lady had set herself to learn Welsh; and during her brief walk thither on the present occasion, she had resolved to perfect herself in that difficult tongue, with a view to future work in her prospective parish. Those few words uttered by the parson had turned the whole course of

her existence. She was no longer the lonely governess, an orphan and retainer, but a free agent, beloved and loving.

Mrs. Pennant was aroused from her lamentations at sight of her vivacious countenance, and Marget exclaimed at her marvellous attempt at Welsh. Caradoc perceived at once that, instead of being an additional burden in the present emergency, Miss Manent might prove a help and blessing.

He told her in a few words what had happened, and asked her if she would kindly cheer his mother, while he and Daisy were engaged with Michael. She had certainly never been required to *cheer* any one before, and another hope and light burst upon her.

"If only I could!" she exclaimed, looking at Mrs. Pennant's face, usually placid to inanition, now clouded with grief.

"Mother, you must help Miss Manent with her Welsh," said Carad, cheerfully.

"I'm sure I should be very glad, my dear, but I'm thinking of Michael. Will you walk upstairs, ma'am?" was the reply.

"If you please, do not call me *ma'am*," pleaded Miss Manent, putting her hand timidly into Mrs. Pennant's.

"Very well, my dear," returned that obedient matron. "What is your Christian name?"

"Emily."

"A pretty-sounding name. But you are looking almost as delicate as Michael. You must have milk fresh from the cow to set you up before you go to Plâs."

Later in the day, when old Pennant and his son had returned, and had been made acquainted with Michael's state, circumstances transpired with regard to Miss Manent's engagement at Plâs which were anything but satisfactory. Sir Shenkin Thomas, in the course of discussion concerning the estate which the Pennants had gone to look over, had naturally spoken of the Earl. He asked David Pennant if he knew Miss Manent, and being answered in the affirmative, said that a misunderstanding had arisen concerning her between Lady Mona and his wife, Lady Thomas. Lady Mona had as-

sumed, without positive grounds, that Lady Thomas had actually engaged her, and had written the evening before her departure for London to say that she was ready. The facts of the case were, that Lady Thomas was in treaty with another governess at the same time, and having to choose between the two, made choice of that other rather than Miss Manent, who had appeared to her incapable of undertaking several pupils. Thus poor Miss Manent was literally on the Pennant's hands, who, at that time, could ill-afford to help her. Her sudden good spirits were soon depressed.

"I—I—will go into the town and take lodgings till I get another situation," she said.

"You will do no such thing," rejoined David Pennant. "As long as we are here, you are welcome; and then—why, we must consult the parson," he chuckled, good-humouredly.

"The Father of the fatherless will provide for her, and He has put her into our care at present," was the old farmer's decisive opinion; and Miss Manent remained at Brynhafod.

She was afterwards pronounced to be God-sent; for she made herself so useful to Mrs. Pennant, not only in amusing her by her bad Welsh, but in doing much needlework for her, that Michael's illness became tempered to that worthy woman. Mr. Tudor was also a frequent visitor, so that pressing anxieties were lost sight of in her desire to entertain her guests. Pressing enough they were, nevertheless, as may be imagined.

Michael's illness was the most urgent. Although Caradoc made as light of it as he could, he was not easy in his mind. Consumption had been their family disease, as, indeed, it was the terrible scourge of the mountainous district in which they lived. The humidity of the climate engendered it, and there was little chance of Michael's getting out of the climate. Moreover, Caradoc feared that there was some trouble on his mind. Watching him narrowly, he remarked that there was restraint in his manner with Daisy, and he could but think it was on Lord Penruddock's account. Daisy waited on him assiduously, and was natural and affectionate as ever; too much so, Caradoc

thought, for one in love. "In love!" The words came to him unsought. What a treasure would be Daisy's love to him who won it in its entirety! and now, if ever, was Michael's time. So thought Caradoc, whose almost womanly tenderness for his brother increased tenfold during his illness. Indeed, neither he nor Daisy seemed to have appreciated Michael before. They had all loved him, but scarcely understood him.

Michael had a character of remarkable depth, which no friend had as yet sounded; and as he lay or sat about during the first week of his indisposition, traits were continually appearing that no one had perceived in his previous every-day life. He, Caradoc, and Daisy were almost always together, joined, of course, by the other members of the family at intervals; and this close intimacy seemed to bring them nearer than ever. Still they were only groping into one another's minds, which is, after all, what the dearest of friends are reduced to do.

The truth was that Michael's delicate organization had received a shock at the announcement of the Earl's decision concerning the lease. Saying nothing, he had felt the more. His heart and interests were at Brynhafod; and since he had taken upon himself to seek to benefit the Monad people, and to identify himself with Daisy in the work, he had conceived the hope of being of service to his fellow-creatures, and labouring for his God. He was fully aware of Lord Penruddock's admiration of Daisy, even before she was herself, for he had noticed it when they met on that Sunday at Monad, as well as at church. Indeed, he was of such a thoughtful, discriminating spirit that he often saw what others did not, and knew what they attempted to conceal from him. Although he had never breathed a word to Daisy that a brother might not say to a sister, he was as well aware as she was that they were intended by his parents for one another, and he had somehow accepted the happy fact, without analysing his own feelings, or sounding hers. They were both young, and their lives had flowed onward together like two sweet streams—side by side, and seemingly to be united at last. He had never paused to

think that such streams sometimes stray far apart as they pursue their course, or to ask whether the fair and shining waves of Daisy's existence were to join the humbler and darker ones of his. It was now that he began to watch, and reason, and question; and this was why there was restraint in his manners with her he loved so dearly. Brynhafod, that he had instinctively regarded as his and her future home, when their elders should cast off their "mortal coil," was to be theirs no longer, and the rude shock that broke up his visionary prospects of living and dying where they had grown up together, seemed to arouse him to the possibility of other changes.

Daisy, on the other hand, grew ever more and more tender towards him, as if she felt she had in some sort estranged him, and were conscious of some other attraction that drew her innermost soul away from him. She read to him, talked to him, sang him his favourite hymns, supported him when he was able to go out, and showed him a love that seemed passing that of a sister.

"They shall marry, please God he gets well!" said David Pennant to Caradoc. "You think he will get well—eh, Carad?"

"I hope so, father. There are no dangerous symptoms as yet; but he must have rest and care."

"How is he to have them now we must be moving? There will be nothing but bother and bustle until it is all over, and he will be sadly wanted. I tell you what it is, Carad, matters are even worse than they seem. We have spent every penny as we got it on the land, which is now first-rate, and if we go to Coed Bach shall have to begin again upon poor, neglected property, with nothing but our stock; for assuredly the Earl will take the crop. Your grandfather is old, I am not young, Michael too ill to work, and you a doctor. The prospect is gloomy enough."

"Sunshine will come, father."

As Caradoc spoke those hopeful words, the long-expected Ap Adam entered the hall. It was his wont to return as if he had

not been away, and as he expressed his dislike to "good-bye's" and "how d'ye do's," his friends generally received him according to his fancy. On the present occasion, however, he broke in upon them like a whirlwind. He had heard of what had befallen at the farm, and was full of wrath and distress.

"Sunshine!" he exclaimed, catching Caradoc's word. "How, is Michael? If anything happened to the lad, I lay it at the Earl's door, The miserly cur!"

"Hush, master!" exclaimed David Pennant. "Thou art more put out than I was. I longed to call him hard names, but had the grace given to abstain. We have had a friend of yours here looking after you—the Honourable General Sir George Walpole."

"I have no friends honourables or generals. He has mistaken me for another. I am come to take Michael's place in the farm, and am off to work as soon as I have seen him and Daisy and the mistress."

"They are in the parlour," said Caradoc.

"Come with me, then," said Ap Adam, meaningly, and they left the room together.

Not at once for the parlour, however. Ap Adam led the way to the schoolroom, where they had a long talk over all that had occurred during his absence. He would acknowledge no acquaintanceship with Sir George Walpole, and when told that that gentleman had offered aid in return for kindness shown him, he walked up and down the room excitedly, exclaiming at his impertinence, and then changed the subject to one of more interest, as he expressed it.

"I find that your beacon is creating a sensation among sailors and fishermen," he said. "They all know it now; and I heard one old sea-captain declare that, whether it was the work of angel or demon, it was a good one, for there was not a tithe of the wrecks there used to be. Who has been tending it lately?"

"I have," replied Caradoc. "But the nights have been light and the weather calm, so I have only kindled it now and then. I suspect that the Earl has been watching, for I have seen him

on horseback as near the place as he could venture. We have met more than once, and he has questioned me about it."

"I will undertake it for the next few weeks," said Ap Adam. "He won't question me. But to be sure, he is absent. However, we must put him off your scent; and, if he is set upon mine—why, 'The Wise Man of the Mountains,' as I hear myself called, will circumvent him."

"At any rate, we can manage it between us," remarked Caradoc. "Daisy must not be implicated."

"Certainly not; for the wreckers all down the coast mutter curses on 'The Witch of the Esgair.'"

CHAPTER XXX.

BROTHER AND SISTER.

"'BE careful to entertain strangers, for in so doing you may entertain angels unawares,'" quoted old Mr. Pennant to his son and grandson, as they sat in what was called Daisy's bower, at the bottom of the garden. "See how Daisy has nursed Michael well again; how the Master works for us; and how Miss Manent takes care of mother!"

"I wish the parson and Miss Manent would make a match of it," remarked David. "I never saw such a pair of lovers in my life! Afraid of the Earl, indeed! Do they think he'd be down upon 'em all the way from London if they ventured to take a sly kiss? That wasn't how mother and I made love. And there's Michael and Daisy as cool as birds in the dawning. They used to kiss good-night and good-morning, and now they never do."

Caradoc stooped to stroke Gwylfa, who lay at his feet.

"I have been observing that they are more distant than they used to be," returned the old man, thoughtfully. "What is the reason, Carad?"

"Since I have been so much from home, grandfather, I have not noticed," was the answer. "Sir Shenkin Thomas says you may have Coed Bach on your own terms."

Caradoc's practice was rapidly increasing; and his attendance on Lady Mona Rhys had been a passport to other aristocratic mansions.

"I would rather live and die in our shepherd's hut than go there!" cried the farmer.

"Oh! my son, think of your wife and children," said his father, laying his hand on his shoulder.

"Well, we are driven to it. Ap Adam says he would go to law, and I believe we might make a case.

"'Let him that would take thy coat, take thy cloak also,'" said the old man mildly.

"The Earl has done that already," groaned David Pennant, who grew daily more and more unsettled as the months went on, and began to neglect his work.

It was now June and hay-harvest, and all hands were needed while the weather was fine. The crop was pretty good, but the haymakers, like their masters, were sorely despondent. They felt that it was the last time they would all labour together, and the jest fell heavily, the song was sad.

"May I arrange about the farm, father?" said Caradoc. "Let me take it, and have done with it. It is nearer Penruddock than this; and if I settle there, as I must if I get on——"

"You! What, are you going to leave us? Is that all the good the Master has done us?"

"Not yet, father; but, if Michael should marry, you will not want me—and town is more suitable than country for a doctor's house."

"Marry, sir! Don't you see that Daisy's head is turned? She thinks no more of Michael than of you. The Castle has been the ruin of us all. Like father, like son. They won't be satisfied till they have destroyed, not only our property, but our peace." David Pennant pointed to the grim towers of Craigavon, seen from the bower. "The Earl, and his son after him, will have it all their own way when we are gone. Tudor had better let me build up his house before I resign my churchwardenship," he continued; "but he hasn't the spirit of a mouse. I say the Earl shall send the bailiffs and turn me out before I leave Brynhafod. We haven't been here for generations to be ejected without a struggle. Where are Michael and Daisy? Go and see after them, Carad. It is

not safe for them to be alone about the hills; Michael may have another attack."

Caradoc left his grandfather and father together to go in search. He was not free from uneasiness about Michael himself, but still more anxious concerning his father, whose irritability of temperament increased daily. He saw that this unusual excitability disturbed his grandfather, and he watched the old man with a constant fear lest the strain put upon him in endeavouring to calm his son should result in uprooting the aged oak. But the roots of the tree were so surely laid in God's own soil, that neither tempest nor undermining could move them; they would keep firm until the Divine Hand should gently loosen them.

As Caradoc left the arbour he glanced back upon father and son, and saw the hand of the elder man laid on the shoulder of the younger, and his white head turned towards the perturbed face. He prayed that resignation might be granted to his father as well as to himself, for he knew that they both needed it.

He went into the house, and found his mother and Miss Manent engaged in preparations for supper. The latter had grown quite sprightly, and was in treaty for a situation with the wife of a clergyman living at a distance, whose husband was a friend of Mr. Tudor's. That gentleman came to the farm when he could, but had not ventured to renew the subject nearest their hearts. What with his parish, the Earl, and his mother, he was much oppressed by the burden of responsibility. However, he visited Monad, accompanied by Daisy and Miss Manent, and tried to take up Michael's work. But the people were strangely suspicious of a clergyman, while eager for Michael, whom they trusted.

Miss Manent had seen Michael on horseback, with Daisy walking by his side, amongst the haymakers on the hill; so Caradoc made for this spot. Here he found Ap Adam hard at work in his shirt-sleeves, who said the absentees had gone farther. Caradoc ventured to hint to the Master that it might be well not to urge his father to maintain the farm, but Ap

Adam disagreed with him. He said that the Earl had forgotten to give notice to quit, and had probably imagined that the expiration of the lease was notice enough; but "possession was nine points of the law," and the Earl would find it difficult to turn them out without legal notice.

"I will have a tussle, if no one else will," said Ap Adam, as Caradoc went on his way.

Skirting the hill, Caradoc walked quietly towards another hayfield, whence his grandfather and father had come. He thought of many things, for, indeed, his life's plot was hourly thickening. His profession, the expected change of abode, his father's altered temper, his mother's uncertain nerves, his grandfather's advanced age, their means of existence expended on the Earl's property, the future management of the beacon, Michael's illness, and, above all, Daisy's decision, weighed down his usually buoyant spirit. He had seen little of Daisy of late. While Michael was confined to the house they had been thrown together, but since that time he had avoided her, he scarcely knew why. Her manner towards him had grown strangely distant and cold, and he could only account for it by the fact of his involuntary interference in the affair of Lord Penruddock.

While he was meditating over these things during his slow walk, Michael and Daisy were seated on a haycock in the hill-field which he was approaching. Michael had ridden thus far, and, feeling fatigued, had dismounted a while. The horse was feeding near them, and the haymakers whom they had come to superintend, were loading a wagon at a distance. They had been engaged in a conversation so earnest that they had forgotten their surroundings, time, and fatigue.

"Daisy," Michael had begun, "I can never thank you enough for all your care of me. I am nearly well, and I owe my recovery, with God's blessing on the means, to Carad and you."

"Oh! Michael," she answered, "not to me, but to Carad. I but carried out his wise orders."

"Truly, he is wise, good, and handsome," said Michael,

fixing his thoughtful eyes on Daisy, who coloured beneath his gaze. "Why are you shy with him, and, indeed, of late, with me? Is it because our hearts are too much bound up in you, Daisy?"

She cast down her eyes, and was silent.

"We have been brothers and sisters so long," he continued, "that it seems difficult to feel that we are not so. But, dear Daisy, will you try to return to the old feelings, and look on me really as—as—your brother—only your brother? While I was ill I thought and saw much that I had not thought of or seen before. I am changed in many ways, and have tried to be resigned to leaving this dear place; but I cannot bear your estrangement."

"I am not conscious of estrangement, Michael."

"I know that, dear; but I suppose illness makes us sensitive. You have been a devoted nurse to me, but I fear the old love has vanished. Is it my fault?"

"Oh! Michael, dear Michael! What do you mean?"

She laid her hand on his, and looked into his face.

"Now thou art our own Daisy once more," he said, taking her hand in both his. "Listen to me, sister. You know how well we love you, and how your happiness is dear to us all as our own—dearer, indeed!"

"Do I not belong to you, Michael? Am I not one of you? Pray do not make me fancy that I am—alone."

"You cannot be alone, dear, while we live. But I wish you to feel free, not bound in any way to us, because you have been so graciously given to us. It is difficult for me to explain myself, still you must understand me. I think our parents have been making a mistake all these years."

Michael's voice faltered, his pale cheeks flushed, and his hands grasped Daisy's convulsively. She trembled all over, and turned pale and cold. What did he mean? He continued low and calm:

'I have schooled myself to love you only as a brother, darling. Brother and sister. Is there a sweeter tie? I can

bear to think that your innermost heart is given to another, if only you will restore to me your sisterly love. Now I have said this I shall have perfect peace."

Daisy could neither speak nor look at him, but her breast heaved, and her tears rose. How often she had longed for some such explanation as this; and now it had come from him, she felt as if her heart would break!

"I know it is best, dear. Say you understand me," he added. "I have my work to do, God sparing me, and would begin it, as our Lord did, freed from self."

She looked into his face fearfully. She dreaded to see some convulsive struggle there, and, perhaps, symptoms of a fresh seizure. She saw only an unearthly sweetness and tenderness. She had never loved him so well before; never known how strong he was in his seeming weakness.

"Dear Michael, I am in your hands! Make of me what you will. Think of me as you will," she said.

He put his arm tenderly round her waist.

"Brother and sister, then, once more, and for ever; and may God guide you in that other choice, which you, not I, must make!" he said, and kissed her.

That great Being alone knew what Michael's struggle had been, or what was the inward peace that succeeded it.

It was at this moment that Caradoc and Gwylfa approached them. They were unconscious of it, but Caradoc saw them, and retreated awhile.

"Has he, then, taken courage and told her, and has she said she loves him?" he asked himself, his own heart ceasing to beat for the moment.

He looked again, and they were separated, and sat together in silence. He moved towards them, and both started, turning red, as if for shame. Caradoc said that he had been sent to look for them, and they rose, half unconsciously. He led the horse to Michael, who mounted with but few words. Then the trio began to descend the hill in the sunset, Caradoc and Daisy walking silently on either side their loving and devoted brother.

CHAPTER XXXI.

EVAN THE TOWER.

EVAN THE TOWER obeyed the Earl's orders to the extent of his courage. He prowled about the Esgair from twilight to nightfall—now hiding under cover of the rocks in the depths below; now concealing himself in the brushwood near the escarpment itself, but he never ventured to face the witches on the Cader. Limping here, halting there, he watched from a distance; but not even for dear life could he dare to extinguish the fire. More than once he saw Caradoc near the spot, but could not ascertain whether he was merely passing accidentally or not. He also thought he recognised Daisy on one occasion; but she was always about the hills and rocks at unseasonable hours, so there was nothing remarkable in her appearance; besides, the witches wore scarlet cloaks, and might even personate her. He had decidedly recognised Ap Adam, who, being less agile and clear-sighted than the others, did not manage the work quite so skilfully. Still he could not declare, and did not believe, that either of these church-going people would be wicked enough to consort with the spirits of the Esgair. Instead of spending his evenings in the Earl's observatory, looking out for wrecks, he now passed them in trying to discover how those wrecks were prevented; but he knew well enough that, unless he could plant himself on the other side of the witch's chair, he should never succeed. Besides, he was not quite sure that he wished to succeed. Since Michael had taken to preaching at Monad, he had felt many qualms of conscience, and began to think that it was

high time the wreckers should cease their trade, even though the Earl lost his tithes, and he himself his dwelling in the Tower.

Summer was not a propitious season for Evan's watch, since the beacon was not often lighted during the short nights. Occasionally, however, when there was no moon, and a threatening of a storm, it would be kindled. But as tihs was only known from the sea, Evan was none the wiser, and his imagination always pictured the Esgair crowded with witches from night to morning.

One evening in July he had hobbled down to Monad to pay a visit to Davy Jones, the fisherman, who was ill. He found Daisy in his hut. She had brought the wicked old man some nourishing food, and was inducing him to listen to a few verses of the Bible. She did not pause to inquire if the bodily had paved the way for the spiritual, because she was used to his declarations that "he didn't believe a word of it; only she was a pretty young lady, and could be reading if she liked." When Evan appeared, she was seated, book in hand, on a rickety stool near Davy, who was on the settle, rapidly swallowing the broth she had brought him. The words, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow," greeted him, as he made his way to Davy through the women and children that stood within and about the door of the low hut.

People wondered that Daisy ventured alone to Monad, and tried to dissuade her from it; but she was fearless, and her beauty and natural dignity carried her through, where grey hairs or careless deportment might have failed. She had sometimes seen sights and heard sounds that made her shudder; still she persevered. When she rose to go, Davy shook hands with her—a favour he had never shown her before.

"There, Miss. 'Twas good broth. Go you and preach to somebody who believes: I don't!" he growled.

"It is God's own Word," she replied boldly. "We shall all be judged by it at the last day. Dr. Pennant will visit you this evening, he says. Evan, may I go and see Betto?"

"Well, I suppose so," replied Evan. "But she's locked in."

Daisy knew how distasteful this "locking in" was to poor Betto, and therefore made no resistance when Evan proposed to return to the Tower and let her in. They went together, and while Daisy remained to bear Betto company, Evan hobbled away to take up his watch near the Esgair, muttering, "Nobody 'll turn in to-night, and the Earl's away if they do."

When he reached the solitary spot, it was about eight o'clock. The air was sultry, the sky threatening, and he remembered that there would be no moon. It was just possible that the witches might light their beacon to dance by, so he would at least be on the look-out. He seated himself on the turf of the tableland that faced the rock, under cover of a large furze-bush. He was all of a tremble, for even at this distance he never felt safe. The Esgair was about half a mile from the Tower, and on the farther side of the Castle and Brynhafod, so he was not a little surprised to see Daisy approach when he had been in hiding about a quarter of an hour. He naturally thought that when she left the Tower she would return home, and not cross the cliffs in the opposite direction. He watched her dainty figure glide over the greensward, climb the stone fence, and finally disappear down the side of one rock, to re-appear on the skirts of the Esgair. She was soon out of sight, and he saw her no more. Yes, he was positive it was Miss Pennant, for had he not left her at the Tower, and had she not come direct from thence? Either she was one of the actual witches, or she had gone to look after them. Still, she must have her Bible with her, and could scarcely be a witch, carrying a counter-charm; for even with the worst people that book was sacred. Evan was much puzzled, and a spark of courage was kindled by curiosity, so that he made up his mind to adventure further; only—not to-night.

While watching intently for Daisy, he was startled by another figure, also approaching from the direction of the Tower. It looked like Dr. Pennant, but then what should bring him away from his homeward path? If he had been to see Davy Jones,

as Miss Daisy had said, he would scarcely wander towards the Esgair, where there were no habitations and no patients. But there was no one else in those parts so tall, erect, and well dressed; and Evan felt sure that it was either Caradoc or a witch assuming his shape. He disappeared and reappeared just where Daisy had, and Evan believed that they must both have fallen into the sea, for they were seen no more.

"The Earl is right," he muttered. "Those Pennants make believe to be better than they are. That Ap Adam done 'em no good. He's always spying about, and haven't worrited the old stones and all the roots of the field for nothing. They're a'league with the witches; that is if my eyes aren't deceiving me, for I am sometimes seeing double."

Evan rubbed his eyes, which were not straight set in his head, and the superstition of second-sight came to his mind. Some heavy drops of rain fell upon the furze-bush.

"Maybe I'll be hearing of the death of them young pipples," he said; and fearing lest the actual witches should be upon him next, as well as the storm, he rose, and limped homewards.

He knew very well that the Tower and Betto were safe at all hours; so, the Earl being happily in London, he did not hurry. He was trying to make out a good case against his lordship's return, which he heartily hoped might be yet distant. As to putting out the light, neither he nor any one within twenty miles would venture on the Cader y Witch: of this he was quite certain; and before he reached the Tower his mind was so mystified that he believed the figures he had seen were evil spirits of some kind or another. Such was the superstition of the time. He was more mystified still, when, reaching his own door—which, indeed, he would not have dared to call his own—he found it shut. He knew that Betto was incapable of rising to fasten it, so he set it down to the witches. It did not much matter to him, as he had the keys in his pocket; still his terror of the supernatural increased, and he fumbled much as he put the key in the lock and turned it.

The kitchen door was open, and Betto sitting as usual oppo-

site it. Years had increased her rheumatism, and she was nearly helpless.

"Sure enough they *have* been here," thought Evan, as he looked at her, for not only had her face a scared expression, but she gesticulated strangely, pointing to the door of the other room.

It will be remembered that the Earl had locked the door of that apartment when he took his farewell survey of the Tower. Evan turned towards it, and perceived that it was ajar. He was frightened out of his few remaining wits, and stood in the kitchen doorway, looking from Betto towards the other room.

"Go in, go in," whispered Betto, so low that he could scarcely hear her.

He moved towards the door, touched it, retreated, advanced again, and finally half opened it, and peeped in. A cry of terror was the result. Either the Earl was seated there in person, or another witch had assumed his shape. Evan got more and more mystified.

"Come in," said a deep commanding voice. "Shut the door. Is this how you take care of the charge committed to you?"

It was the Earl, and no imitative spirit; and Evan nearly sank down in his astonishment and fear.

"Account for your absence and the open doors," said his master.

"I ran to the Esgair, my lord," replied Evan, shaking in every limb, his face more oblique than ever. "I have been watching the fire ever since your lordship left, and I was seeing the witches close by, and I forgot the door, my lord, and left it ajar in my hurry, your lordship, and saw Dr. Caradoc Pennant and his sister, or the fairies in their shape, my lord, right on the side of the Esgair, your lordship——"

"What!" thundered the Earl.

"I am as sure as sure can be it was them, my lord!"

"When? Where? Answer coolly, fool! I shan't eat you."

"Just now, my lord; climbing the Esgair like goats."

"Bring round my horse, and expect your dismissal!"

Frightened Evan disappeared, and soon returned with the horse. The Earl mounted, and trotted off briskly across the downs in the direction of the Esgair, and, like Evan's witches, away from his natural beat.

"Look out, for a storm is brewing!" cried his lordship, as a flash of summer lightning gleamed before his eyes, and the rain pattered down.

"Come here a minute, and tell me all about it. I'm all of a tremble," cried Betto, as Evan hobbled up the Tower steps. "How did his lordship come?"

"He knows best. On a broomstick," muttered Evan.

He certainly did know best, for he had arrived at the Castle unexpectedly that morning, to the utter consternation of the servants, who were variously enjoying their liberty at home and abroad. His lordship liked to come down suddenly upon his dependants at all times; but this descent from London was like a descent from the clouds. He had already surveyed his Castle, and written for Mr. Tudor; ascertained that Miss Manent was at Brynhafod, and that the Pennants showed no symptoms of departure; heard that there had been few storms and no wrecks; and that it was rumoured that Mr. Tudor was engaged to Miss Manent.

For a proud, reserved man, the Earl was very inquisitive, and managed to learn all that passed around him, while having the reputation of speaking to no one. At the Castle, the servants, like Evan, were "expecting their dismissal."

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE BRINK OF THE PRECIPICE.

MIDWAY between the Tower and the Esgair the Earl met Daisy. Caradoc was not with her, so, apparently, Evan had seen double. At the spot where the encounter took place, the down surmounting the rocks rose abruptly into the mountain, and the pass was narrow and difficult. The cliffs, on the one side, were sharp and steep; the hill, on the other, straight and stony. Two people, or even a horse and one person, might pass each other, or a mountaineer might possibly scramble up the mountain, yet the place was dangerous. The Earl knew it, and dismounted. He rode a sure-footed Welsh cob, that had paced the road by night and day, so, if he feared, it was for Daisy, not for himself. The storm was still threatening, the evening advancing, and Daisy was running when the Earl met her suddenly.

"Pray do not dismount, my lord; I can pass easily," she said, surprised at his unexpected appearance.

But he did not heed her, and stood in front of her, holding his horse's bridle.

"So you are the Witch of the Esgair!" he said, grimly.

"How so, my lord?" she asked, looking him unflinchingly in the face.

"Have you not just been there to kindle the accursed fire?"

"Blessed, not accursed, since it saves life, my lord."

"You own to lighting it. Then why this mystery?"

"I own to nothing, my lord. But if I could kindle the beacon, would it not be a righteous work?"

"It would show that you were in league with the Evil One,

as people already suspect. No woman could mount the Esgair unaided by Satanic influence. The light is infernal!"

"Then are the false lights heavenly, my lord? Are the Jack-o'-lanterns, and the meteor that flits about the rocks before a wreck, and the strange fires the wreckers kindle, and all the lights that decoy ships to their destruction, are they God's work?"

The Earl looked savagely at Daisy, but she knew no fear.

"Who are you that dare thus to defy me?" he asked.

"One whom it pleased the Lord to save, when an infant, from a horrible shipwreck, and who would devote her life, if she could, to save others," she replied, courageously.

His eyes fell, and he laid hold of his horse's mane.

"You shall be burnt for a witch. You have bewitched my son," he said hoarsely, after a pause.

"Oh no, my lord! You mistake. My Lord Penruddock has sought to bewitch me, and failed."

"Failed, hypocrite! You know that you have made him promise to marry you, and expect him to return and keep his promise."

As the Earl said these words he moved a step forwards, still holding firmly by his well-trained horse, and seized Daisy's arm. She knew the danger of the spot, and, although fearing no intentional injury from the Earl, she uttered a slight cry, as she exclaimed,—

"Take care: you or I may fall over! We might be killed, for the rock is steep. Pray let me pass, my lord. It is getting dark, and I am still far from home."

"I have you in my power, girl. I can do with you what I will," he replied, glancing fiercely at her as he grasped her arm.

"You have no power over me, unless it be given you from above," she returned, using, unconsciously, divine words.

Her voice did not falter, for she feared no evil, though her cheek paled slightly, and she laid hold of a piece of projecting mountain limestone with her disengaged hand. The Earl held

the arm which was nearest the sea. No one but the Omniscient knew what was passing in his mind, but his eyes fell before the fearless, untroubled, beautiful face of the young girl, who was so close to him that he felt her breath on his cheek.

"Do you know that I can hurl you into the sea?" he muttered, after a pause.

"Not if my Heavenly Father stay your hand, my lord. As He rescued me from the sea once, so He can protect me now. But I do not fear your lordship."

Again he glanced at the fair, grand face, and his grasp slightly relaxed.

"Tell me what you have done with my son, and where he is at this moment; then swear never to see him more, and I will release you," he said.

"I have not seen my Lord Penruddock since he left the Castle. I do not know where he is. I believed him in London. I cannot swear to see him no more, because he may force himself upon me. But, indeed, my lord, I have no desire, as you think, to marry your son."

"Then swear you never will."

"Never! How can I tell, my lord? I would do much to secure the lease of Brynhafod to my foster-father, who will, we fear, lose his reason if he leave it. Your lordship refuses to renew it, but——"

A sudden movement of the Earl stayed Daisy's words. He seized both her arms, but she did not relax her hold of the rock. Still the thought came to her that he was going to throw her into the waves below. She uttered a prayer for help, then a cry, and finally spoke again, as dauntlessly as before.

"Remember that One sees us who is more powerful than you, and He is the Father of the fatherless."

Perhaps the Earl had no murderous intentions; he might only have wished to frighten Daisy into submission. Be that as it may, he let go one arm as a flash of lightning darted between them. Their eyes were blinded for the minute, and he resumed his grasp of his horse.

"The storm will be terrific—may I pass on, my lord?" asked Daisy, whose courage was gradually giving way.

"No—not until you swear," replied the Earl, whose resolution returned with eyesight.

"Then I must force my way on the other side, and your life will be in danger," she said, making a great effort to release herself, and push between the mountain and the horse.

Again he seized her with a muttered curse, and what the result would have been, had not the God in whom she trusted sent help, He alone knew. But the help came. While the Earl was endeavouring to obstruct her passage, and in so doing had pushed her almost to the brink of the precipice, Caradoc appeared. In a moment Daisy was in his arms, the Earl prostrate at his horse's feet. Had the animal moved, his wicked master would have been over the rocks. Caradoc placed the fainting Daisy in safety, beyond the dangerous part, and returned to pick up the prostrate figure.

"Lord Craigavon!" he exclaimed, as he grasped his collar, and saw his face for the first time—"the Earl of Craigavon!" he repeated, in blank astonishment.

The Earl righted himself sullenly, and was about to mount his horse, when Caradoc prevented him.

"My lord, I shall indite you for attempt to murder," he said.

"Say nothing, and I will renew the lease," returned the Earl, cowed, for the first time, by a tenant's son.

"Crime cannot be so condoned," cried Caradoc, indignantly.

"The girl obstructed my path, and defied me; I but pushed her aside," growled the Earl, recovering his natural manner.

"I saw a struggle of life and death, and you shall answer for it, my lord," retorted Caradoc, resolutely.

"Let his lordship pass, Carad; I think he meant no harm, and I forgive him if he did," came in a low voice from Daisy, on her knees at a little distance.

"Mount, if you will, my lord, and let Almighty God and your own conscience judge you," said Caradoc, passing the Earl, and hurrying towards Daisy, who was in mortal terror.

The Earl's face was dark as the gathering storm, but he was compelled to obey. With an imprecation, and the muttered words, "They shall rue it!" he mounted, and rode off towards the Esgair.

When he was gone, Daisy's strength gave way, and she fell back, fainting, on the mountain turf. The rain was beginning to fall heavily, and night was coming on; so Caradoc took her in his arms and carried her to a place of shelter and safety. This was a hollow made by a landslip in the hill above the cliff-path, where they had often sat together to survey the sea and distant vessels. Several sheep were here before them, sheltering from the storm; but they scampered off at their approach. He laid her down on the dry earth and began to chafe her hands, unfasten her cloak and hat, and wipe the raindrops from her white face. He was on his knees at her side, gazing on that face which gleamed in obscurity like a snowdrift, when consciousness, and with it terror, returned. She threw her arms round him, with the whispered words,—

"The Earl!—save me from him, Carad! Dear brother, where are you?"

"Here, my darling. You are safe; he is gone," he replied.

"Where am I? Is it my brother Carad?" she said at last, with a heavy sigh, still clinging to him. "Do not leave me."

"Never, my sister—my darling!" he returned, gently replacing her on the sod, though still supporting her.

She recovered in a few minutes, and became aware of the situation, and conscious of what had passed.

"Twice saved, and by you, my brother!" she said, looking up into his face, as he knelt by her side, his arm still round her, as if protecting her from evil.

"Thank God!" he ejaculated reverently, brushing the dew from his brow and a tear from his eye.

"How did you find me, Carad?" she asked, her hand in his.

"I went from Monad to light the beacon, found it already prepared, and came on here. What was the Earl doing?"

"I scarcely know. Oh! he is wicked, Carad. He called me Witch of the Esgair, and has found out that I kindle the light; said I had bewitched his son—I who know nothing of sorcery—then wanted me to swear that I would see him no more. I could not swear. I tried to pass him by, and the horrible struggle ensued. I think I was on the edge of the precipice when you saved me."

She shuddered; and Caradoc pressed her closer to him.

They were silent for a few moments. Why were they so happy there, with the tempest without, darkness creeping within? Why did Caradoc wish they could be there alone together for ever. He forgot that Michael and Daisy had been like lovers ever since he had found them in the hay-field; forgot that he had himself jealously kept aloof from them; forgot the Earl, the lease, home, impending misfortune—everything but Daisy, in that solitude; for were they not alone together? And she?

Very slowly, her beautiful face crimson, her heart, lately silent, beating quickly, she withdrew from him, and arose. The roof of their temporary shelter was so low that she could not stand upright, but, trembling still, she went to its front to look out upon the storm.

"It is abating, Carad," she whispered softly, as he stood beside her. "I can brave it now, with you. They will be uneasy at home."

A clap of thunder and a flash of lightning seemed to gainsay her words; but Caradoc picked up her cloak and wrapped it round her. They stood yet awhile, side by side, silently watching, while the clouds dispersed and the rain abated.

"I wonder where the Earl is?" said Daisy, shuddering.

Almost as she spoke a horse's hoofs were heard, and she shrank back, whispering, "Here he is. Save me, Carad."

Again his protecting arms sheltered her. They saw the figures of the Earl and his horse pass the hollow, but were not themselves perceived.

"He carried a light. Where could he have procured it?"

said Daisy, glancing out of her hiding-place. "Look, Carad!"

Caradoc, who was thinking only of Daisy, looked. There was certainly a glimmering light visible as the Earl cantered swiftly on.

"He has been to the Esgair and kindled it!" exclaimed Daisy.

"He would neither have had courage nor time," returned Caradoc, smiling. "He thinks to follow us, but we will follow him. Are you strong enough, dear Daisy? The rain has ceased."

She looked into his face, as if to say, "I have strength for anything with you," and so they went out together into the night, following on the footsteps of the grim Earl.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

IMPORTANT! IMMEDIATE!

THE servants at the Castle had been more alarmed by the Earl's unexpected return in broad daylight than they were by his prolonged absence at night. His lordship had been in the habit, for years, of coming and going at unseemly hours, and that frequently unknown to his domestics. His own apartments, and even the stable particularly appropriated to his horses, were so arranged that no one could have access to them without his permission, and, as he kept the keys, they were rarely invaded. Sometimes his groom had orders to wait up for him, at others to go to bed, for his lordship was not above unsaddling his favourite horse himself when he returned late. His whole establishment, including the Countess, were so accustomed to his secretiveness that they had almost ceased to speculate upon it. The general opinion, that he had something on his mind, was received as a thing of course, and forgotten as things of course are. If a peasant, abroad by mischance, met him in the middle of the night, or even far into a stormy morning, alone, drenched, and silent, his comment was that the Earl was a brave man, anyhow, since he feared neither the dark nor the spirits that haunted it, and cared no more for the tempest than the calm.

On the night of his encounter with Daisy, no one knew at what hour he entered the Castle, for he let himself in at his private postern, unsaddled his horse himself, went to a sitting-room in his tower, where a light was always burning, threw off his drenched clothes, and wrapped himself in a warm Turkish

dressing-gown, and, finally, opened the window, and looked out upon the sea. The storm had passed off, and the night was still and dark. Nothing was visible but a faint gleam on the ocean at a distance, which he knew to be the reflection of the light on the Esgair.

"No wrecks to-night," he muttered, and went into an adjoining room, where wine and cold viands were always prepared for him.

He sat down before them, and began to eat and drink. Both apartments overlooked the sea—one on the side of Ogot Bay, the other of Ton Bay. They were cheerless enough, though furnished with carved chairs and innumerable chests, gilt bedstead and yellow satin hangings. But these were tarnished and tattered.

The Earl was habitually abstemious, so he was not long at his meal. When he had finished, he sat down in a large easy chair, the covering of which was much worn, and meditated on the events of the day. He had a habit of biting his nails, and, when not so occupied, frequently muttered to himself. He was, of course, thinking of Daisy and Caradoc, and determining what course to take under the circumstances.

"If they tell, I can charge them with attacking me," he thought and partly said. "She impeded me; he hurled me to the ground. I have might. Marry Penruddock! Death first! I will—I will—murder her!"

Scarcely had he framed that word before he started up and paced the room, moving his arms as if beating the air.

"No, no——not murder! I never murdered. They were all mine by right——lawfully mine, I say! The villains robbed me, cheated me of my own. I have but circumvented them. Why was the girl saved to destroy my peace, to thwart me, deprive me of my own, and—take away my son. My son! First my goods, then my son. I dare not, cannot deny him anything. She must be got rid of. No, no!——not murdered, not murdered! I never murder!"

His lordship paced from room to room restlessly, now light-

ing many candles that were in different apartments—now extinguishing them—anon glancing through the different windows on the tranquil night and sea.

"She will give him up if I renew the lease, but I shall make treble of the property," he mused, as the calm of nature soothed him. "And I hate the Pennants. I should have been rid of her, but for that vain serf, Caradoc. No, no——not murder! Only a struggle for life!"

He opened the window, and leaned out. Some moving thing crossed the reflected light of the distant beacon on the sea, and vanished.

"A ship!—saved again!" muttered the Earl. "I will ruin them all. They would have killed me if they could. And the girl! And Penruddock! If we do not get rid of her, he will have her in spite of me. But not murder—only my money, my rights, my wreckage!"

This soliloquy was interrupted by a knock at the door. Imperative business alone could authorize so daring an act.

"Who's there?" cried the Earl, arrested in combating some invisible agent.

"A letter, my lord. Brought post from Penruddock," replied a voice without.

"Send Morris with it."

Before leaving London his lordship had written to order Morris to return to the Castle, and that obedient woman was there to meet him. Devoted as she was to the family interests, she was yet not pleased at being roused from sleep to wait upon his lordship; still she rose, dressed as quickly as she could, and crept, accompanied by the first messenger, up the Tower stairs. The Earl partly unclosed the door at her timid knock, and with the words, "Wait below till I ring," received the letter.

Actual business always steadied his nerves, and he seated himself quietly at an old bureau. Having placed a candle at his elbow, he examined the letter.

"'Important! Immediate!' and franked and directed by Walpole," he said to himself. "The proposal in form at last.

I knew it would come if I left them together. But why does the fussy old fool squander money by all this hurry?"

His lordship broke a huge seal, impressed with the Walpole coat-of-arms, and read the letter. He had much difficulty in deciphering it, for it was written in a large scrawly hand, and in haste. He went over it two or three times before he could master the contents. As they became clear to him, his dark face grew darker, his teeth and fist clenched. He had to fight with reality now.

The letter contained the intelligence of Lady Mona's sudden elopement with her cousin, Everard, and the consequent illness of the Countess. It was written by Sir George Walpole. It said that the morning after the Earl's departure from London, her ladyship was missing, and that on due search and inquiry it was discovered that she had taken the law into her own hands, and was on her way to Gretna Green—at that time the goal of desperate lovers. As the Earl was absent, there was no one in London of authority sufficient to pursue them; and when Sir George wrote, both he and the Countess were stunned by the unexpected shock. Indeed, he wrote the evening of the elopement, which accounted for the arrival of the letter so immediately after the Earl, as well as for the haste of its diction. Sir George was evidently distressed, and urged the Earl's return, not only on account of this unexpected event, but because the shock had been too much for Lady Craigavon, who had been all the day in a fainting condition.

The Earl no longer walked the room, nor muttered, but sat awhile, still, looking on the ground. Did he remember that while meditating the destruction of Daisy, he had lost his own daughter? Possibly not; yet so it was. Our sins generally meet commensurate punishment. What he did remember was, that he had lost, not only his child, but untold gold, and he had almost exclaimed with Shylock, "My ducats—and—my daughter!" He did exclaim, "A spendthrift for a nabob! Two hundred a year for hundreds of lacs of rupees! An Everard for a Walpole! She is no daughter of mine. I

renounce her. Henceforth I have only a son. But the money! —Sir George's money! We shall not have that. I must make it up! More rents—more tithes—more wrecks! I will put out the light! I will——No——not murder! Not murder!"

His lordship rose, and rang his bell violently. It was answered by Morris, who was admitted. She came simpering in, but started back to the door when she saw his ghastly face.

"Shut it, and come forward," he said. "Do you know of this elopement?"

"I have heard of no elopement, your lordship."

"Why did you let Lady Mona go to town without you?"

"By her ladyship's wish, and your desire, my lord."

"Where is Miss Manent? Why did she not go?"

"Lady Mona dismissed her, my lord."

"Planned! I believe you are all in the conspiracy. Where is Miss Manent?"

"At Brynhafod, my lord. Lady Thomas didn't want her after all—never wanted her, so her ladyship's maid says."

"What business has she at Brynhafod?"

"They are saying she is to marry Mr. Tudor, my lord."

"They are saying lies! You and she are cognisant of my daughter's elopement. Don't deny it. You remained behind to shield yourselves. I sent for you believing you faithful. I find you faithless. Go, I dismiss you!"

"Indeed, my lord, I am not knowing of her ladyship since she left the Castle. I never heard of an elopement. Miss Manent may, but I'm as innocent as a babe. I was wanting to go to London all the while, and if I'd been there, I should have been seeing after her ladyship."

The suspicious Earl believed none of Morris's asseverations. He told her to wait while he wrote a note; and, turning to his bureau, wrote hastily to Mr. Tudor, ordering him to bring Miss Manent to the Castle with him.

"Send this at daybreak," he said, as he sealed it.

"Is it Sir George Walpole, or Captain Everard, my lord?" asked Morris, whose curiosity overcame her fear.

"Hypocrite! Who was in her secrets if you were not?"

"If I was put on my oath, my lord, I am knowing nothing about it. But I am thinking there may be one as does. Her ladyship was confiding more in that Daisy Pennant of Brynhafod than in any one else. And they were a long time together before the journey to town."

"Ha! Lady Mona wished the girl to go with her!"

"To be sure her ladyship did, my lord, as I remember too well; for she was to have taken my place, only Mr. Pennant was too proud to let her. There's proud them farmers are growing, my lord!"

"We will crush out their pride. Find out if that waif—that foundling—knew of this disgraceful affair. She should never have associated with my daughter."

"So I was always saying; but *my* word was dross, hers gold."

"Gold! gold! We have exchanged gold for dross, woman!"

"Then it is the Captain, my lord. I was thinking so. Indeed, and I am symperthising with your lordship."

"Who are you who dare to sympathise with me? Go! No, stay. What do you know of that girl at Brynhafod?"

"She's a vain minx, my lord, and tries to draw all the men after her."

"Watch her: see what men she draws, and let me know."

"Then I am not needing to go immediate, my lord?"

"Not if I may rely upon you."

"If your lordship would be raising my salary, and just paying me up, you should find me a deal more trustworthy than many a sickerfant your lordship believes in."

"I'll think about it; at present I have more serious business. See that the letter is sent, and find out what you can of the proceedings at Brynhafod, particularly the daughter's—the foundling's—the—the——Do *you* know where Lord Penruddock is? Has he been at the Castle since we left?"

"Not to my knowledge, my lord; and I've been hearing constant from Mrs. Davies, as keeps no secrets for me. I am

thinking I can find out if your lordship will be pleased to raise——"

"Enough! I will think of it. You will remain here while I return to town. Let me know all that passes. I shall be back soon—soon. Let every one understand this; and if Lord Penruddock appear, write at once. You may go."

Morris obeyed; and the Earl was left to his solitary meditations.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

AN ENGAGEMENT.

CARADOC and Daisy walked through the storm as quickly as it would let them. The encounter of the Earl had taken away a portion of her strength and spirits, but Caradoc's presence restored them. Leaning on his arm, and protected by him, she felt that she could defy both earls and elements. They only spoke at intervals, though they seemed nearer and dearer to one another than ever. They hurried on, breasting the wind and rain, and thinking how near a final separation had so lately been.

"How merciful the Lord is! But for Him and you, Caradoc, the Earl or I must have been over the rocks," she said, at last.

"The cowardly villain!" he muttered. "But let us keep his secret, for the present, at least. It would add to their trouble at home to tell them what has happened. You are sure you are quite well, Daisy?"

"Quite sure."

A slight pressure of his arm and a glance from her brave eyes sufficed. They were silent again.

"There is the corpse-candle!" suddenly whispered Daisy, pointing across the cliffs towards the Castle.

"Then the Earl must see it as he rides. I hope it will frighten him into believing it appears for him," returned Caradoc, as he saw the ominous meteor at a distance.

"I wish I could be rid of my silly superstition," she added. "I always shudder when I see it."

"But you do not believe in it? The lightning is quite as supernatural," he said.

"No; faith and sense forbid me. But I dislike it. See how it flits and wanders along!" she replied.

"We thought the Earl carried a light; perhaps that is it," suggested he, pausing, and gazing after the *ignis fatuus*.

"Impossible. It appears and disappears like the jack-o'-lanthorn the peasants and Marget and even mother dread to see," she murmured, instinctively clinging to Caradoc.

They were silent again, and hastened on.

Before they reached Aran Tower the storm had cleared off. They met Evan, who was prowling about, and who asked them if they had seen some one on horseback.

"Yes—the Earl," replied Caradoc boldly.

"Where?" asked Evan. "I must have missed his lordship."

"At the Bwlch Du. The Black Pass."

"What if his lordship has tumbled over, Mr. Carad?" but Caradoc and Daisy had passed on, while Evan limped, in terrified haste, towards the pass.

The Aber ran below Aran Tower, and our wayfarers climbed down the intervening steep defile, and took the path by its side which led to the vicarage. Here they were met by the bailiff who inhabited it, and who asked them much the same question as Evan, and received a similar answer. He also went in search of his master, while they hastened home by the hill-path.

"There it is again!" said Daisy, when they gained the open at the summit. "If there are ships in the offing, it will be a fight for victory between the *canwyll corff* and the *canwyll Esgair*. God defend the right!"

The meteor was flitting on the path below.

When they neared the farm they were met by Michael.

"Here you are!—I am so thankful!" he exclaimed. "They all said you were together, and probably sheltering at Monad; but Daisy is so venturesome that I could not rest. How is Davy Jones?—and what of his soul?"

"What of your body, Michael, out at this hour, and after the storm?" asked Caradoc. "You will undo all the good done.

Davy Jones is more likely to pull through than you, if you run such risks."

"I think he really listened while he swallowed the broth," said Daisy—"and he asked particularly after you."

"That is at least something gained," returned Michael. "The Earl has come back; Mr. Tudor brought the news this evening, and asked for a bed, being summoned to the Castle early to-morrow. His brother Owen has been off ever since the Earl left, and we are afraid he may lose the stewardship."

"Not as long as the Vicar does the work for next to nothing," rejoined Caradoc. "The master is right—Owen will never be good for anything; his mother has ruined him."

"I hope Mr. Tudor will make the Earl repair the vicarage. How glad Miss Manent will be that he stays till to-morrow! But where can mother put him?" said Daisy.

"In the master's room, who is off, no one knows where. I left him and Miss Manent together in the parlour, and father has given orders that they are not to be disturbed. He manœuvred them into it, telling Mr. Tudor it was his last chance, since Miss Manent goes on Thursday."

"Then father is still equal to a joke. He will not go out o' his mind," laughed Carad; and Daisy joined.

The trio finally reached Brynhafod, and were greeted by many expostulations, especially from Marget.

"Past ten at night, and wet through!—and all for those rogues at Monad! Bibles and broth, preaching and possets, medicine, too, gratis, I'll be bound—and all for them Godless cut-throats! We shall have no more o' this, at least, when we lose sight o' the sea."

"But, Marget, if only we can save one!" whispered Michael.

"Save 'em, indeed! Go to bed, and save yourself," retorted Marget, surveying Daisy's dripping cloak.

They found old Mr. Pennant reading the Bible, their father engaged in the unusual task of poring over some old papers, and their mother dozing, as was her custom, over her knitting.

David Pennant had been fast falling into the lethargy of despair, when Ap Adam persuaded him to examine the said antiquated papers, while he went to the neighbouring town to make some private inquiries.

"I say, Carad, it is my belief that the lease doesn't expire till next March, and we'll have a fight for it," began the farmer, oblivious of the late storm and his children's exposure to it.

"Of course we will, father," said Caradoc, cheerfully, who, fearing for his father's reason, took the course of humouring him.

His grandfather, a man of peace, glanced reproachfully at him; so did Michael. Mrs. Pennant was roused by her husband's voice, and opened her round, placid eyes.

"Father has shut them into the parlour, Daisy," she said, with a significant smile. "Emily put her best gown on, and looks such a pretty young lady. I wish they would come out, for it is time for bed."

As it seemed probable they never would come out, old Mr. Pennant suggested they should be summoned. When they made their appearance, Miss Manent's flushed face and fluttered manner told their own tale. Mr. Pennant's kindly ruse had succeeded, and they were engaged at last.

"I will go to bed. Come with me, Daisy," whispered Miss Manent.

They went up to Miss Manent's room—the state apartment—and that lady suddenly threw her arms round Daisy, and hid her face in her shoulder. She tried to speak, and failed. The realization of happiness was too full for words.

"I know, dear Miss Manent, and I am so glad," whispered Daisy, pressing her lips on her friend's fair hair, and holding her protectingly. "We shall never lose you."

The young girl was really stronger, in her fearless nature, than the timid woman.

"You have all been such friends to me. But for this house it would never have been. And I am so unworthy," ventured Miss Manent at last, sitting down.

She considered Mr. Tudor as second only to the Earl.

"You must let me be bridesmaid, even if we are far, far away," said Daisy, kneeling at her side.

"Oh! it may not be for years, dear, because we must not offend the Earl," replied Miss Manent, softly.

"What is right, is right—what is wrong, is wrong. You are engaged, it is right to marry," returned Daisy.

"Mr. Tudor will know best," said meek Miss Manent. "I wonder what the Countess and Lady Mona will say."

"Poor Lady Mona!" sighed Daisy.

The Vicar's courage was soon put to the test. While he was at the early farm-breakfast the following morning, seated by the side of the fair, blushing, timid Emily, the Earl's note arrived. Its bearer had heard that he was at Brynhafod, and had brought it there instead of taking it to his distant home. The order to bring Miss Manent with him annoyed the whole party. Mr. Pennant said she should not go, but Miss Manent declared that she could not disobey the Earl, and was rewarded by an approving glance from Mr. Tudor. Caradoc and Daisy also looked at one another. The note must have been written after their struggle with the Earl, and they feared it had, in some way unknown to them, occasioned this summons.

"No man has a right to control another's actions," cried David Pennant, excitedly. "Miss Manent is free, and his lordship has no power over her. She is not beholden to him, and never was. I would see him at the bottom of the sea before I obeyed him. I say that I am her protector now, and she shall not go!"

Old Mr. Pennant rose and put his hand on his shoulder.

"My son, no harm will happen to the young lady in company with him she has chosen," he said.

"No good ever happened to any one in the Earl's company," retorted David, so fiercely that his family quailed.

"Right, father," muttered Caradoc.

"My boy, remember God and your children," said the old man. "He bears with evil for His children's sake; bear with it, also, for yours."

"I will, father; I will," groaned David, covering his face.

And Miss Manent slipped away to prepare to accompany Mr. Tudor to the Castle.

They found the Earl ready to receive them. He was in his business-room, surrounded by papers, and looking more moody than usual. He greeted them distantly, and bade them be seated, not rising himself. Without looking at them, he asked at once concerning his children.

"Where is Penruddock, Mr. Tudor, and what is the meaning of this elopement, Miss Manent?"

"I thought he was with your lordship;" and "What elopement?" were the instant replies.

"You have had the care of my children, and I expect you to account for them. Why did you not bring them up better than to allow the one to absent himself, the other to run away and marry contrary to my orders?"

Of course both tutor and governess protested, but the Earl relieved his own mind by casting blame on them. He was, however, quite aware that he had overreached himself, and that Lady Mona had circumvented him by his own weapons. His own absence, and that of Miss Manent and Morris, had rendered her flight easy. But he did not choose to let this appear.

"In addition to conniving at my son's disappearance, and abetting my daughter's elopement, I hear that you are both countenancing my tenants in resisting my will: I who have been your sole support!"

His lordship paused and glanced up a moment, and perceived an unusual decision in the Vicar's eye.

"Miss Manent has been a guest at Brynhafod, while seeking another home, my lord," replied that gentleman, firmly. "Lady Mona made a mistake, or, perhaps, purposely chose to leave her behind. She is about to undertake another situation, until your lordship is pleased to restore the vicarage, whither I hope to take her as my wife."

"And, indeed, my lord, I know nothing of Lady Mona's

marriage. I only hope she may be happy," broke in Miss Manent.

"Marriage! Happy! What next? She is ruined—penniless—and has lost hundreds of thousands!" cried the stern father. "I do not approve of marriage, and shall not restore the vicarage. Tell Farmer Pennant that if he has not left Brynhafod before the 29th of September, I will eject him. Tell your brother that since he chooses to neglect his work, and absent himself while I am away, I dismiss him from the stewardship; and tell the people generally that, although I return to town for awhile, I shall be back soon. Lady Craigavon is indisposed, and I go to her ladyship. Good-day."

"Good morning, my lord. Am I to consider that my brother is no longer steward?" asked Mr. Tudor.

"You can keep it till I return. If you hear from Penruddock, let me know. Is Dr. Pennant engaged to the girl who lives with them?"

"Not that I am aware of, my lord."

And so the interview ended, the Earl having gained nothing thereby, and Mr. Tudor fearing that he had lost much. Still, as he and Miss Manent returned to the farm, arm-in-arm, they resolved to strive to do their duty henceforth, as in God's sight, and without fear of man.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE EARL'S "DAY OF GRACE."

THE Earl was giving his final orders to Morris, and locking up the Castle, preparatory to leaving in the afternoon, when he was told that Mr. Ap Adam wished to see him on particular business. His lordship admitted him, with a surly "What does he want?" His mind instantly recurred to the scene of the previous evening, and he imagined him to be an ambassador from Caradoc.

"I will say the girl obstructed my path in order to kill me and secure my son," he muttered, as Ap Adam was shown in.

The master apologised for his intrusion, but added that he was anxious to see his lordship before he left.

"Your business, sir—my time is precious," said the Earl.

"I have been examining the Brynhafod leases, my lord, renewed and renewed ever since your lordship's family superseded the Pennants in the possession of this property, and I think it is pretty clear that Mr. Pennant has been over-hasty in concluding that the last lease has fallen in. It was drawn up, carelessly enough, at Christmas, and was to be for ninety-nine years from September. Now it does not specify whether the ninety-nine years are to end this September or next; so it appears to me that your lordship cannot claim the farm till next year. This will give Farmer Pennant time to look about him, and collect his ideas."

"Are you a lawyer, sir?" asked the Earl, relieved from one fear, while enraged by resistance to his will. "I thought you a doctor, or rather half doctor, half schoolmaster."

"I have dabbled a little in most things, my lord, and particularly in law. Your lordship will find I am right."

"Right or wrong, Farmer Pennant leaves Brynhafod in September. The farm is mine, not his."

"It should be his, my lord, if old documents tell true. They show that when the Norman king gave your ancestors the property, wresting it from its lawful owners, he or they had conscience enough to leave them for their own the farm of Brynhafod, whither they retreated. How it got into the possession of the Earls of Craigavon is not known. But they have hitherto had the grace to let the Pennants live in it as tenants, and it is to be hoped your lordship will reconsider your determination, and follow their example."

"My lordship will do no such thing. Who are you who venture to give me advice unasked?"

"I am less than nobody; but I have, perhaps, the advantage of your lordship, in having devoted my life to the study of antiquities. A ruin, a stone, a parchment, if only a thousand years old, have sufficed to make me happy, and in my researches in this neighbourhood I have stumbled upon many queer things that have interested me much, and none more than the history of the Pennants and Penruddocks. I find that your lordship's family were originally Mortdevilles, but assumed the name of Penruddock with the Craigavon property; 'Pen,' or 'Head,' being equally the affix of the old and new families."

"May I inquire if you came here to give me information concerning my ancestors? If so, I decline to listen. Or did you come on behalf of Farmer Pennant, at his request?"

"By no means, my lord. I came direct from Lawyer Lewis, of Penruddock, to inform you that he, as well as I, believes that the lease does not expire for another twelvemonth."

"I shall put it into my lawyer's hands; but Pennant, Brynhafod, and his brood shall leave all the same. What is your interest in them, may I ask?"

"They have given me food and shelter for some ten or

twelve years, and therewith the chance of pursuing my fancies. I have made some strange discoveries concerning the origin of the system of wrecking, and have been thinking of asking your lordship to patronize a book I have been writing on that and other topics connected with this neighbourhood. May I seize the present opportunity?"

Ap Adam's eyes had a strange twinkle as they looked at the Earl. His lordship's fell beneath them, but he replied, sternly enough, "Lady Craigavon is in London, and indisposed, sir. I am recalled to town, and have no time for nonsensical speculations, or, indeed, for conversation with one who is reputed a quack and necromancer. I have given orders to my steward concerning Brynhafod: I refer you to him."

"Your lordship must take the consequences if you persist in what is contrary to law. I have come to warn you on my own responsibility, and shall advise Mr. Pennant not to forget that 'possession is nine points of the law.'"

"The Earl of Craigavon is powerful enough to defy law on so unimportant a matter. Good morning!"

"Perhaps you will think of my projected book, my lord. It may aid you in suppressing this accursed traffic in the property of drowned men and women. I am very strong upon it, I assure you, and hope to do good."

"I have enough to do without reading useless trash, and you had better earn your living more honestly than by writing it. That will never bring you a guinea."

The Earl was beginning to show his teeth like a surly bulldog, and Ap Adam snapped on, terrier-wise, accordingly.

"Use or uselessness will be proved on publication, my lord. I hope to stir up a lazy government to put down wrecking. I have the ear of a statesman or two."

"You! Quack-doctor! Wizard! Pedagogue! Pauper! The ear of a statesman! What next?"

"The deluge, and what was found when the waters subsided. There will be a fine crop at the bottom of these bays. Good morning, my lord. Reconsider the lease."

With another twinkling glance at the furious Earl, Ap Adam hastened away, knowing that he had caused a panic that would not easily be allayed.

He followed Mr. Tudor and Miss Manent, and found them at Brynhafod, discussing their interview with the Earl with the family assembled for their noonday dinner. He swallowed a hasty meal without joining in the conversation, but when the dinner was over, and they were secure of ten minutes' quiet, he took part in it, or, rather, usurped it, by recounting as much as he chose of what had passed between him and his lordship. He wound up with, "Now, my friends, be assured you need not stir a foot from here. I have the miser in my clutches, and he knows it. Be firm for the next two months, and you are safe for another year, and then something else will turn up. He won't dare to go to law."

David Pennant struck his fist upon the table with a "Bravo, Master! We'll stick like leeches!"

Then old Mr. Pennant spoke for the first time. He had been listening attentively to all that had passed, and to the different opinions of the family, which changed, as opinions will, in cases of difficulty, with the last speaker.

"I take it that we are a Christian family," he began. "We read, believe, and try to follow the precepts of our Lord, as taught in His Holy Word. Then we must neither 'resist evil,' nor 'do evil, that good may come.' This farm is the Earl of Craigavon's; let him do with his own what beseemeth him. He wishes to be rid of us, let us not force ourselves upon him. It is clear that the lease expires either this year or next. I am its holder, and head of this family—we will go. Listen, son and grandsons. If we remain, we shall ruin, perhaps, the widow and orphan; if we depart, the Earl will leave Mrs. Tudor and Owen where they are, and, maybe, repair the vicarage and let our young friends marry. A year, more or less, is not a lifetime. The master is far-seeing, but God sees farther still, and can order our goings out and comings in at pleasure. He knows why the Earl's mind is set against us, and can overrule it

if so He will. Let us 'overcome evil with good,' and give up the place quietly, leaving it at its best for the next tenant, or for his lordship, if he takes to it. We have done well by the farm, and lived well by it. Perhaps we have loved it too much, and set our hearts on an earthly rather than a heavenly home. Our Father is teaching us better. What if the property did once belong to our forefathers? So did the Holy Land to the Jews, but He deprived the rebellious people of their inheritance. Are we not rebellious now? Are we not murmuring because we are to leave these our fleshpots for the wilderness, which may prove to some of us the Promised Land after all? My children, let me see you submissive before I die."

As the old man spoke, the countenances of his hearers changed, one by one. Even David Pennant's softened, and his eyes became moist. Mrs. Pennant and Daisy were wiping away their tears, and all were sensibly affected. The master was silent, if not convinced. The old man glanced round the table, while Daisy's hand stole into his. Seeing the effect of his words, he continued—

"I have known the Earl since he was a boy; I knew his father before him. I will see his lordship before he departs, and try to soften him as the Lord has softened thee, my son. He is in trouble greater than ours. Come with me, Michael."

He rose, no one venturing to gainsay him, and, accompanied by his youngest grandson, slowly left the house.

The Earl was at his sternest and moodiest when they were ushered into his study.

"Who next!" was his exclamation; but he did not choose to be denied, not knowing their exact business—which Mr. Pennant at once made clear.

"I am not going to detain you, my lord," he began, in the forcible language of his country; "you have been already hindered, and I hear Lady Craigavon is ill, and you are in trouble. I come to assure your lordship that we shall quit Brynhafod according to your wish, and place no impediment of law or ill-feeling in your way. I should like to have ended my

days where they began, had it pleased God, for I have never been more than twenty miles away during my fourscore and ten years, and it will be hard to quit our pleasant places; but, since you have other views for the farm, my lord, I hope it may be as prosperous in other hands as it has been in ours. The Lord of lords has seen fit to bless our seed-time and harvest—may He continue to bless them to those who succeed us!"

The Earl looked up from the desk at which he sat, and saw a venerable head bowed before him. He had expected recrimination, and perhaps threats; and had resolved on resistance at all costs. He was met by a submission that he neither appreciated nor understood, but attributed to fear of his superior rank and power. Yet scarcely fear, he thought, since the Pennants were proverbially independent. But he failed, alas! to see that the Sovereign Ruler of the universe was holding out to him the means of tardy reparation, and perhaps opening a road for repentance from sins known only to himself and that omniscient Being.

"Sit down, Pennant. I am glad you have come to your senses," was all he said.

"Thank you, my lord, my grandson and I are going. But we, as Christians, wished to assure you that we bear you no ill-will. Michael would have farmed the estate, God willing, after his father, since Carad has chosen to be a doctor; now we must seek another home. I am an old man, and shall soon find mine; his will doubtless be provided."

Michael stood close to his grandfather, his pale face calm and gentle. The Earl glanced from one to the other.

"Will you marry the young girl your father has adopted? If so, we may yet come to terms," he said, abruptly.

"I think not, my lord," replied Michael, quietly.

His grandfather looked at him keenly, and said,

"It is the desire of our hearts, and we have trusted to see him and Daisy in our places, my lord."

"But the girl—is it her wish also? If she has higher views, she had best be forced out of them."

"The hearts of young women are too intricate for probing, my lord; but I think our Eye of Day is humble, and does not look above her station."

"Then why have you educated her above it? Why did you let her come here?"

"Your lordship knows it was by my Lady Mona's wish."

That name silenced the Earl, and his dark look, banished for a moment, returned.

"Yes; low company has been my daughter's ruin. Away with your Esgair Witch, and take care that she never sees Lord Penruddock again. She nearly caused my death last night. It was an ill day for Craigavon when you rescued her. I have lost a hundred thousand pounds."

"What does your lordship mean?" asked the two men.

"What I say. See to it, and get rid of her, if you value your peace. She, and your other foundling, that Ap Adam, are in league with the Evil One."

"May God forgive your wicked words, and put better thoughts into your heart!" exclaimed Mr. Pennant, uplifting his eyes and hands. "And may it please Him not to visit on your own head, and in your own offspring, the hard things you have said of the shipwrecked orphan. Look to yourself, Lord Craigavon, and know that there is One to whom all hearts are open. May He pity and forgive you, as I do."

"You are a set of canting hypocrites!" returned the Earl, darkly. "When you are gone there will be no more preaching at Monad, rousing up my people against me, and making the Vicar a useless log. No more Witches on the Esgair; no more 'old men of the mountain.' I am thankful to say the farm you were after is let, and there isn't another within twenty miles."

"Oh, my lord! why do you wish us ill? We have done you no harm," said Michael, involuntarily.

His sweet, pleasant voice arrested the Earl. Indeed there was an earnestness and simplicity in Michael which few could withstand.

"Go back to your plough and harp, young man," said his

lordship, suddenly thinking of Penruddock. "When we want you to preach or play to us, we will send for you."

"And, indeed, my lord, I will thankfully come," returned Michael, following his grandfather, who had turned slowly to the door.

As they passed out with a bow and a "Good afternoon, my lord," the Earl took a purse from his pocket and began slowly to count his guineas. Has his "Day of Grace" departed with them?

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE COUNTESS IS DEAD.

MISS MANENT left Brynhafod for her new situation with many thanks and many tears. Owing to Farmer Pennant, her engagement to Mr. Tudor was ratified and announced, and although his mother disapproved of it as much as the Earl did, she did not venture to make her disapproval apparent to her son, who was the mainstay of her family. When, therefore, the Vicar and his betrothed drove off in the Brynhafod gig the morning after their interview with the Earl, it was understood that they were to be married as soon as circumstances permitted. But alas! for these "circumstances," which too often weary out more ardent attachments than theirs. The orphaned and friendless governess was, however, happy in her distant prospect, and in the fact that she was to be with friends of Mr. Tudor's, albeit she carried with her a dread of the Earl and his possible power to set aside the engagement. Both she and Daisy also felt much anxiety about Lady Mona, not quite unembittered with self-reproach, each fearing, in the sensitiveness of conscience, that she had not done her duty by her. Daisy in particular, while she rejoiced in Lady Mona's escape from the thraldom of the Castle, wondered if she had been right to promise secrecy.

She confided her doubts to Michael, in whose brotherly love she now wholly trusted. Indeed she believed that his feelings for her were, and always had been, simply fraternal. He then admitted to her that he was also troubled in mind on the same subject, having overheard the conversation between Lady Mona and her cousin on the night of the ball; and they both

came to the conclusion that secrets were dangerous burdens, and hard to throw off, as that of Christian. Daisy longed to tell him of her secret concerning the beacon, but forbore until Caradoc should deem it fitting.

Had she known the distress this secret was causing him and their grandfather, she would have urged its disclosure on Caradoc. The Earl's words, "Away with your Esgair Witch, and take care she never sees Lord Penruddock again—she nearly caused my death last night," haunted them sadly, and they talked them over and over, not knowing what they meant, and dreading to add to the general ill-feeling by repeating them. They prayed together, and alone, to be guided in what they should do and say in the great emergency in which they were cast, not only as regarded Daisy, but David Pennant, whose mind was still overturned by this sudden trouble.

Indeed, when David Pennant heard that his father had actually settled to give up the farm, he said with his resolute manner, "Then let those who yield, strain; I won't budge in the matter. Those who give up this farm must find another; and there isn't much time to lose. Michaelmas will soon be here, and we shall have no roof to cover us."

What the Earl had said concerning Sir Shenkin Thomas's farm was right—it was let to another tenant. Caradoc, therefore, undertook to scour the country in search of a fitting home, and Daisy, who was a fearless and untiring rider, resolved to aid him. Meanwhile Ap Adam continued his seemingly fruitless search for the origin of all things—from the Dolomites to false lights; and from pre-Adamite formations to pre-Norman pedigrees—and was rarely at the farm.

The dull calm that precedes the storm fell over Brynhafod. Master and men went to work stolidly, and but for the old farmer and Michael, the harvest would have been neglected, the garden untended, the root-crops left to rot. Mrs. Pennant's mercury also fell with her husband's, and her recovered energy, small though it was at best, sank to zero. But for Daisy and Marget, matters would have been as bad

within doors as without. The foster-daughter and the old servant did the work between them, while the mistress rocked herself in the corner, or tried to condole with her husband, and, by so doing, only made him tenfold more irritable and obstinate.

It was now that Caradoc came to the front. As eldest and strongest, he undertook a difficult post, and filled it to the best of his ability. Although his sympathies were with his father, whom he most resembled both in person and disposition, his common sense went with his grandfather. He therefore urged exertion on all and worked for all. He and Daisy, in their superior health and strength, were more capable of unusual effort than the others, and while he gave the orders and went hither and thither professionally, or in search of a new home, she saw that they were carried out. They were thrown together on all sorts of business consultations, and while he felt and knew the danger to himself, he yet braved it, loving her more and more the while. He remembered but too well that she had refused to promise Lord Craigavon to give up his son, and he saw that she and Michael were more affectionate and confidential—more like lovers, he thought—than ever. This angered him, for he was jealous for Michael, trampling down personal feeling with the strong heel of unselfishness. Indeed, he inclined to think that Daisy's love was in Lord Penruddock's keeping, and, while sorrowing for Michael, tried to forget himself. But he had not much time to think of love; he had been taught to make passion secondary to principle, and both he and Daisy had really too much actual work to do to waste overmuch thought on this, the deepest, subtlest, and least-controlled feeling of the human heart. Yet, in the midst of labour and trouble for others, they were sometimes reserved, shy, and even angered one with the other; sometimes open and happy together as when they were children.

"The master promises to see to the beacon when we are gone," said Daisy to him one day, after they had been, for the hundredth time, discussing their dangerous meeting with the

Earl. "If we have to go to that farm in another county, we shall never tend it again."

"The equinoctial gales will soon come," returned Caradoc, "and I hope to light it every evening while they are blowing. We shall be here while they last. Besides, no one seems to realize that I have made my stand in this neighbourhood, and, if I remain in Wales, it must be at Penruddock. You know that a 'rolling stone gathers no moss.' Besides, if the Earl has really found out our secret, it may be as well to make it public, and let him, the wreckers, and the philanthropists—if there are any,—battle it out amongst them; they will at least learn that they can save life if they will, and the world will know where the fault lies if they will not. If the Earl take Brynhafod into his own hands, there will be no one to take the part of the shipwrecked. Even Gwylfa will be gone—eh, old dog?"

Gwylfa, who was asleep before the hall fire, roused himself up at hearing his name, and came to his master's side, poking his cold nose into his hand, and fixing his eyes upon him.

"No more little girls to bring ashore, or drowning men to save, my brave old friend," continued Caradoc, sadly. "But God can help them, and bring good from evil. Daisy, what is the matter?"

Caradoc had suddenly looked at Daisy, and saw that she stood with hands clasped and lips parted as by a great fear. He repeated his question.

"You cannot leave us, Carad!" she cried, impulsively—"you could not be so cruel! Grandfather is old, father strange, mother melancholy, Michael sick; we have only you."

"Absence would be best, for me at least, and perhaps for others," he said, looking down into her troubled eyes. "I had even thought of writing to Sir George Walpole, and asking him to get me the appointment he suggested; or of taking the partnership still offered me by Dr. Moore. I should earn more in a month there than in a year here, and could help the general cause more effectually."

"It would be the death of mother, and—and—the misery of us all," returned Daisy, her clear eyes drooping. "London seems another country, India another world."

She suppressed some great emotion, and Caradoc saw it. Had it not been for those others—his brother and the future Earl,—he might have fancied that some feeling deeper than that of a sister or friend lay beneath it; but he smothered even the hope, fearing to encourage in himself a love that he believed neither could nor ought to be returned. All he desired was to be permitted to overcome his own feelings by absence from the beautiful and courageous girl in whose presence he forgot himself, and all else but her.

"It could not be for some time," he said, after a long silence. "When once they are settled elsewhere, and the wrench is made, they will all be better. Indeed, a change might rouse mother, and be of service to Michael. This sharp sea air does not suit him. I sometimes wish he could take the voyage to India instead of me. Father is strong, and will recover when Michaelmas is past. There seems a strange coincidence now between that period and our Michael's name. I think he was well called, he is so good and religious."

"He is, indeed!" ejaculated Daisy, who had walked towards the window to conceal that emotion which Caradoc saw.

While she stood there, gazing on the setting sun, Mr. Tudor passed. He came in without knocking, and was breathless and excited. He did not give any kind of greeting, but said, abruptly and hurriedly, "I have sad news. The Countess is dead!"

This was an overwhelming announcement, and Caradoc and Daisy were speechless for a few moments. So was the rest of the household when the melancholy intelligence spread. All its members were arrested in their work, complaints, or revengeful heart-burnings by the solemn words, "The Countess is dead!" She was neither much beloved, nor much disliked, but—she was dead!

Mr. Tudor had received the announcement from Sir George Walpole. Her ladyship had been sinking, he said, for some weeks, and had died shortly after the Earl's return—"In his arms," he wrote, "and his lordship is so overwhelmed that he has requested me to communicate the sad event to you."

There was a breathless calm that evening at Brynhafod. No one ventured to comment on what might, they scarcely knew how, affect all the neighbourhood; but when the still and solemn hour of prayer came, old Mr. Pennant spoke for all. He prayed, in the earnestness of faith, for the bereaved Earl, his son and daughter, and as his words rose, clear and powerful, to the Throne of the Eternal, evil thoughts departed from the breasts of his fellow-worshippers, and David Pennant groaned in spirit, and ejaculated, "Lord, forgive me!"

CHAPTER XXXVII.

EXTINGUISHED.

ONE breathing form the less in this world, one spirit the more in another! So it was when the Countess of Craigavon ceased to live, and so it will be when we shift the mortal and put on immortality. This life was over for her, and what of the next? Who shall say? God is Judge, His blessed Son Saviour. But the transition of each soul from one state of existence to another, leaves a strange solemnity behind. We grope in the night for some beacon to point whither it has gone, and ransack the day for memories of what it did, said and believed when in the body. It is then that faith in the atonement of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, is most precious; then that we realize that without Him hope fails.

None knew what were the Earl of Craigavon's feelings when he returned alone to the Castle, for he spoke little, and never named the wife from whom he had been parted; but all speculated upon them, and passed impartial judgment on her whom he had lost. The speculations were doubtful, the judgment negative. Some said he was softened, others hardened. But concerning his wife, all agreed; and what they said was true. The Countess had done neither much good nor much harm during her existence. The rich knew little of her, the poor nothing. She had lived, apparently, to dress and embroider, to drive and sleep. She had never striven to improve husband or children, and never contradicted them. She had been equally passive to her dependants, receiving but not giving service; being neither overbearing nor grateful. She had lived and died like the graceful

lobelia, diffusing neither poison nor sweet. Still, people said that, had her surroundings been different, she would have been different. This might have been true; still, it behoves every individual to do his best in the situation in which he is placed, and so to influence others for good. Perhaps the Countess had done her best, none could say; but she was gone to her account, and her fellow-sinners judged her kindly.

Not so the Earl. He still remained below and was severely judged, because, having life still preserved, he did not amend. His resolution concerning the Pennants, the vicarage, and his affairs generally, seemed unchanged, and he held the reins of his power as tightly as ever in spite of his bereavement.

It was understood that Lord Penruddock reached London too late to see his mother alive, and that Lady Mona and her husband were either in Scotland or abroad when the event took place. The Earl left his establishment in town, intending, he condescended to tell Mr. Tudor, to rejoin his son there when the Winter Session began. The Countess was buried in London, and the gossips were quite ready to say that this was owing to the expense of bringing her remains to Craigavon. They were also grieved to miss the pageant of a lordly funeral.

The equinoctial gales came on, and the Earl was as busy as ever with his wrecks. He sent scouts all through his manorial sands, to watch the wreckers, to find out where false lights were placed, to see that he had the proper tithes of his osyters and other fish, and to bring the spoil to the Castle. He was resolved, he said and thought, to make his son the richest instead of one of the poorest noblemen in the principality.

While thus engaged he did not forget the true light on the Esgair, nor his meeting with Caradoc and Daisy. Indeed, he had more time to think of what he called his wrongs, now that wife and daughter were far away!

One afternoon, when the wind was rising to a gale, he rode to Aran Tower, put up his horse, and having scanned the

horizon through his telescopes, ordered Evan to come with him. It was nearly five o'clock when they took a mountain path that led away from Tower and Castle, in the direction of the Esgair. As the Earl did not say whither he was going, Evan did not suspect, but limped along by his lordship's side, answering questions, and trembling for what the next might be.

"What are they about at Monad? Is Davy Jones dead?" asked the Earl.

"No, my lord, he is well again. Dr. Pennant was curing him," replied Evan.

"What are they doing at Brynhafod? Where going?"

"They are preparing to leave, my lord. The doctor has taken a house in Penruddock, and people say they are all to be stopping there while they are looking for another farm."

"What will they do with their stock?"

"All the farmers in the country are willing to take care of stock and crop till they're settled, my lord. People are saying they've offered to take them in too, but nobody is knowing."

"What has become of that schoolmaster, Ap Adam?"

"He is taking turn at the Witch now, my lord. Nanno, Monad, tavern bach, was seeing him on a broomstick the other night down there by the Esgair."

"What do you mean by 'taking turn'?"

Evan's voice sank to a whisper, as he glanced round.

"They are saying, my lord, that he do dress as a man one week, and stop at Brynhafod; and that he do turn witch, and ride his broomstick up to Cader-y-Witch the next, when he is lighting the witch's fire."

"We are about to put a stop to his diversions. Show me the shortest path to Cader-y-Witch."

"There's no path, my lord. 'Tis all tanglewood and rock."

"You must make a path, for we are going there."

Evan stood aghast, looking at the Earl. They had reached the point of the hill which dominated the Esgair, and could just see the back of the great rock known to them as the Witch's Chair.

"I have been so near as I was able, my lord," said trembling Evan. "I was watching down there among the fuzz-bushes, when I did see Miss Daisy and the doctor."

"Lead the way to that spot," commanded the Earl.

They scrambled down the mountain-side, now holding by a stone, now by a twig, and sending goats, sheep, and rabbits scampering, until they reached Evan's hiding-place amongst the gorse. This was, as we have already seen, at the entrance to the Esgair, or ridge of rock, and, indeed, partly hid it from view.

"Now precede me to the Cader," said the Earl.

"The Cader, my lord!—the chair where the Witch sits when she lights her fire, your lordship! I 'ouldn't be going there for a million o' money!" shrieked Evan, beginning to tremble from head to foot.

"You will go there with me," continued the resolute Earl.

"I'm willing to mind the wrecks, and even the drowned men, for your lordship; I'm taking care of the chests and barrels as the sea throws up as if they were my own; I'm sacrificing my life, and my time, and my very soul, as Michael Pennant is saying; but I can't be facing the witches and fairies—upon my very deed, I can't, my lord—and I ——"

Evan was about to add "I won't," terror giving him courage, when he met the Earl's eyes for a moment, and paused.

"Go, if you intend to keep your place," said his lordship. "Where I can go, you may; your risk is mine."

"My lame leg couldn't stand it, my lord. If your lordship's prepared for another world, I'm not. Think of his lordship, your son, and don't be risking of your precious life, and of mine, as is precious to me. Hearken how the Witch is raising the wind, and how black it is getting to hinder us."

The wind was, indeed, rising to a hurricane, and the darkness was creeping on.

"Idiot!—superstitious fool!—coward!" cried the Earl, suddenly forcing his way through a furze-bush, while Evan fell on his knees.

His lordship had resolved to go alone. He fixed his eyes on the topmost point of the Witch's Chair, and having surmounted the barrier of furze, with many an adverse prick from that bristling enemy, he proceeded along the ridge. He found it less dangerous at first than he had imagined. Such wild stories had been circulated concerning it, not only as regarded the supernatural, but the actual impassableness of the rock, that no one ventured to approach it, save the trio from Brynhafod; and he had supposed it really impracticable until he had discovered that Daisy scaled it. As he made his way, however, projecting pieces of rock and slippery places sadly impeded it; and nothing but the energy of hatred and avarice could have induced him to pursue it. But he was thinking not only of himself, but his son. He had resolved to find out this secret, in the interest of Penruddock, himself, and, as he put it, the world at large—for was it not for the benefit of mankind to unmask pretended witchcraft? And were the wreckers farther down the coast to possess the spoil that should be his? The lord of Craigavon, like many another, could so far deceive himself as to transform his vices into virtues.

As he neared the chair, the top of the ridge was so narrow and pointed that he was compelled to crawl along on hands and knees, clinging to the stones and lichens that he met with. However, he triumphed at last, and was at the back of the Cader. He stood awhile, to take breath, behind this curious stronghold of nature. He asked himself whether the fire would be alight on the other side, and what he should see there. He believed in neither witch nor fairy, yet, in spite of his indomitable will, he trembled slightly as he stole cautiously round the huge back of the chair and peeped at the front. There was Caradoc's beacon, blazing in mid-air beneath its protecting canopy of stone. Caradoc had been before him and lighted it.

The astonished Earl went cautiously to the front, and began to examine the simple structure. His brow darkened, and his hands clenched as he did so. "Only this!" he muttered,

as he walked round and round the huge lantern, now looking at one fastening, now another, then seeking to open it and peer within. But the clasp had been subtilely made, and he failed to unclose it. Here, then, was the witch's fire without the witch; here the light that had puzzled and terrified the wise and ignorant. He had expected to be there early enough to meet the kindler: he only saw the contrivance. The thought was forced upon him that a lighthouse would benefit sailors for generations to come; but, alas! he crushed it down with the reflection that this was how he had been deprived of his manorial rights. He looked from the beacon to the sea. There was a ship struggling with the wind not far from the quicksands, and there were other vessels on the horizon, dimly visible in the lurid autumnal twilight. The sea was beginning to storm the base of the Esgair, urged on by the riotous equinoctial gales. The Earl again turned to the beacon, and began to handle its stays. Those who had fixed them had done so in faith, laying their foundations in the rock, and trusting in God to keep them sure. The Earl did not think of this, when, with a resolution that would have made him a hero in a righteous cause, he managed to unfasten the lantern from its supports, and to leave it swaying in the wind. Did he wish to extinguish the light? As the wind rose higher and higher he began to feel his own footing insecure, and had to hold by these supports, still rooted in the rock. With great difficulty and personal risk he succeeded in taking down the lantern. He knew that he was safe from observation of man, and gave no thought to the Omniscient Eye then watching him.

"She shall neither marry nor defraud him!" he muttered, thinking of Daisy and his son.

He rested the beacon on the rock, for it was heavy, and holding it firmly with one hand, while he grasped the iron stay with the other, surveyed the darkening, storm-bound coast. The ship was certainly weathering the gale and getting off the quicksands. Letting go the beacon, he gave it a mighty kick, and sent it headlong into the waves below.

"'Only this!' he muttered."

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CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE CANWYLL CORFF.

WHAT Evan said concerning the plans of the Brynhafod family was true. While he and the Earl were discussing them, Daisy was on her way from the town of Penruddock, where Caradoc had actually taken a small house, to serve as shelter while his father continued obstinate and undecided concerning his future abode. Daisy was a capital horsewoman and accustomed to ride alone. She was equally fearless by night as by day, and nothing delighted her more than a scamper over the mountain-side in a high wind. Caradoc had promised to come and meet her when he had seen a patient or so and lighted his beacon, so she felt doubly secure as the evening advanced.

She had been over the new house with a view to furnishing it, and as she rode briskly homewards by the hilly road that separated Penruddock from the hamlet of Craigavon—a distance of six miles—she thought over the impending changes, as the evening came on, heedless of approaching darkness. She had done her best to show a cheerful face at home, but when alone her spirits sometimes sank. Nothing depressed her so much as the dread of separation from Caradoc, who seemed resolved not to relinquish certainty for uncertainty; at least, so he put it. The master, also, had announced his determination no longer to be a burden to his friends, telling Daisy, secretly, that he should remain about the coast, to watch the beacon and the wreckers. She little imagined, as she pondered these matters, what had even then happened to her beloved light.

When she reached the point at the top of the hill, where

Caradoc had promised to meet her, she reined in her horse, and waited awhile. Beneath her lay, far-stretching into the sea, on the left, the Castle; on the right, the Esgair; and midway, the Tower. Mountain paths led from all these to the rutty road she had reached, and her eyes pierced the gathering obscurity to follow the one from the Esgair, in the hope of seeing Caradoc ascend it. But he did not appear. Had he been at hand he must have seen her, for she and her horse stood out well-defined upon the mountain.

"He has missed me, and we must brave the wind alone," she said, and turned her horse's head to the left.

The horse knew his way, and descended the hill in safety, until they reached a cross-road that led, on one side, to the Castle, on the other to the farm. It was dark, but the sure-footed and sagacious beast feared night as little as his mistress. He had taken the way to Brynhafod, when Daisy, glancing down the other road, thought she saw a light moving towards it from the direction of the cliffs.

"It is the *canwyll corff*. I will meet it!" she cried, and turned the somewhat unwilling horse the other way.

Riding as quickly as she could down the Castle road, she reached a gate that led to the downs. It was open, and she urged her horse through it. What with the darkness and wind they had both much difficulty in taking up and maintaining a position beneath the hedge that flanked the gate. She saw the light she believed she had often seen before, making towards her, and it must be confessed that, in spite of her courage, she trembled.

"Carad says it is only a jack-o'-lantern. If it were supernatural the horse would shake—all animals do when the fairies come," she murmured, patting hers.

The light came steadily on.

"It must be visible from the sea to all ships that have not passed the Esgair," she thought. "It might lure them to destruction, and probably has. Why am I frightened when it is only a vapour? I wonder the wind doesn't put it out."

As it drew nearer and nearer, her horse pricked up his ears and neighed.

"Thou art not terrified, at least, Pen, or thou wouldst not neigh!" she added, stroking him.

But the fitful fire wavered and retreated, as if startled by the sound. She was also startled, for she fancied she perceived that some large, dark body retreated with it. After a while, however, it advanced again, and as it approached she was convinced that some object, either corporeal or ghostly, accompanied it. She stroked her horse, and whispered to him to be quiet. He knew her well and understood her, for she had made of him a friend and intelligent companion, by kind treatment and gentle management. Every one who likes may make a confidential friend of horse or dog. Pen stood still as a warrior's steed, while Daisy had enough to do to keep her hat secure from the riotous wind, which had already loosened her long, fair hair. Happily, the gale kept off the rain, and she feared the wind as little as the wind feared her. So she and Pen stood their ground beneath the hedge, which she knew to be thick and sheltering. On and on came the *canwyll corff*, now pausing and seeming to flicker, now advancing unsteadily. As her sight accustomed itself to the gloom, she became assured it was followed by a huge figure of some sort, and she trembled in spite of herself; but not so the horse. He pricked his ears and turned his head towards it.

"Softly, Pen—quietly, good horse!" whispered Daisy.

Although she was, as we have said, fearless, she was not quite free from the superstitions of the country, and that of the corpse-candle, as the precursor of death, terrified her somewhat, in spite of Ap Adam's and Caradoc's arguments. Still she kept her seat bravely until the wandering light actually came nearly close to where she was; when she felt ready to fall from her horse from terror. She distinctly saw the figure of a man on horseback, and the candle, or whatever it might be, appeared to be fastened to the horse's head. By some uncontrollable impulse, Pen neighed again. A deep voice sounded, and the

phantom seemed about to bear the terrible light away. But Daisy uttered a shrill cry, and arrested them. She had recognised the voice.

For a moment the light fell on her, and a hand suddenly turned the lantern that contained this much-dreaded candle, and darkness succeeded. The horseman, whether shadow or substance, was about to pass Daisy and the gate, when she suddenly turned Pen round and impeded the way. She recovered courage and voice sufficient to exclaim, authoritatively,—

"Stop, you shall not pass till the light is put out!"

She was conscious that it was a dark lantern.

"Who are you who dare to stop the way? Let me pass," returned the voice, and the speaker urged his horse against Daisy's, hurtling both steed and rider, but not discomposing them.

"I am the waif saved from the ship wrecked by means of your false light," she replied, boldly.

"I know you. You are the witch of the Esgair," cried the dark rider, again striving to push his way.

"And I know you, my lord. You are the Earl of Craigavon!" she replied, dauntlessly, holding the pass.

"Witch? sorceress! I will denounce you to the world!"

"Lordly wrecker and cruel miser, God shall denounce you!"

Truth was revealed there in the darkness. The shipwrecked had discovered one of the lights so long employed to lure seafarers to their ocean grave, and the lord of the castle and the manor used it for his greed.

"Witch, let me pass!" growled the Earl, after a pause.

"Not till you have extinguished the light," replied the brave girl.

"*Your* witch's fire is put out, and will never burn again," he returned, savagely. "*Mine* only lights me over the cliffs."

"True light and false, my lord. The beacon saves, the corpse-candle destroys. Beware lest it foretell evil for yourself.

I am told that such a light was seen before the ship sank that bore my parents and me; they were drowned—I was, perhaps, saved to avenge them."

"Girl! you shall never marry my son!"

"Your son, my lord! I would not wed your son, even if I loved him. That is not the retribution prepared for you. Were he fairer than lilies and purer than refined gold, I would not have him."

The passionate scorn of Daisy's voice must have told on the Earl, for his, usually cool and hard, changed.

"Not have him! There is not a lady in the land who would not marry Lord Penruddock."

"Maybe I am a lady born, and I would not, my lord. Let that fear sleep for ever. And the beacon on the Esgair is not mine, but my brother Carad's, who has saved as many lives as the false fires have lost. He is a man, and will face the world now that we know what the jack-o'-lantern is! A lantern after all! Put it out, my lord, and pass. Or let me extinguish it."

While they had been talking, the Earl's horse had moved towards Daisy's, and their heads touched. Daisy leaned over her saddle, stretched out her arm towards the lantern, and, before the Earl could prevent it, turned it round and opened it. The light kindled her face for a moment as she bent towards it; then the wind instantly blew it out. The Earl had a whip in his hand, which he raised with intent to strike her; but she reined back her horse almost into the hedge, and so avoided the blow.

"Pass on, my lord," she cried, waving the offending hand towards the gate.

"Curse you for a witch!" exclaimed he.

"And may God forgive you for your curse," she replied.

The Earl remained a moment uncertain, muttering words which the wind carried off, and which did not reach Daisy. Remembering their encounter on the cliff, however, she thought it possible that he might dismount and obstruct her passage in turn; and she resolved accordingly. He was, indeed, prepar-

ing to dismount, although she could not see him for the darkness. She stooped over her horse and whispered, "Now, Pen, up the down. You know the way," just as the Earl had one foot on the ground, the other in his stirrup.

The wind was blowing a hurricane, but the horse breasted it at once. He set off at a gallop, only slightly guided by Daisy, whose hat had fallen, and whose habit swelled in the gale. The discomfited Earl glanced after them through the night, and remounted, resolving on bitter revenge. While the one trusted to equine sagacity on the wild mountain—midway of which stood the farm,—and the other in the rocky road leading to the promontory—on which was seated the Castle,—signals of distress reached them from the sea, and each felt sure that some hapless ship must have struck upon the quicksands. The light on the Esgair had failed—the *canwyll corff* succeeded!

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE WRECKERS.

WHILE Daisy was waiting on horseback for Caradoc, on the Mynydd Fach, or Little Mountain, he had been ascending it on foot, with the intention of meeting her, according to promise. But, glancing back towards the Esgair, he distinctly saw the figure of a man on its summit. He had always feared lest some wrecker, less superstitious than his compeers, might brave the supposed witch in a desire to extinguish the beacon; so he paused to watch the figure scramble back from the Cader, and disappear amongst the gorse. Impelled by fear of consequences, instead of keeping his appointment with Daisy, he hurried back towards the Esgair. He arrived at its entrance while just light enough remained for him to see two men walking across the cliffs in the direction of the Tower. One of these he knew, from his limp, must be Evan; the other he suspected, from his height and carriage, to be the Earl. At first he was prompted to follow them, but, changing his mind at a sudden thought, he ascended the Esgair instead. Accustomed as he was to the height, he was not long in reaching the Cader-y-Witch.

"They have put out the light!" he exclaimed, in a voice of anger and alarm, as, rounding the back of the great chair, he found himself in darkness. "They have carried off the lantern," he added, looking at the void, and feeling for his iron girders. "Can there be such devils in human form? I will expose them, come what may; the truth shall be known before we leave. There are sure to be ships in danger in this

wind and darkness." He glanced round. "Ah! that is a wrecker's fire down by the quicksands!"

Careless of the night, or the result, Caradoc began to descend the rock by the dangerous path already mentioned, crying aloud, "God will defend the right, though His ways seem strange to me!" He reached the base in safety, guarded by that protecting Power. The tide was ebbing, so he scrambled along the beach in the direction of the fire, which was lighted on a rock as near the quicksands as possible. As the light on the Esgair led away from the quicksands, so this fire would lure into them. He knew the very point where it was kindled, and now stumbling over rocks and stones, now wading through pools of salt water, he resolutely laboured on towards it.

"The wretches have sighted a ship, or they would not have kindled it," he muttered. "I am glad to see for myself what I have watched for so long."

He reached it at last, and found that it was a kind of bonfire, which must have been kept alight by means of dry seaweed and brushwood. Two men were seated watching it, whose faces were clearly revealed by the flames that fell upon them. One was Davy Jones, the fisherman, the other his nephew. Caradoc went boldly towards them, and, before they had time either to resist or escape, collared them. He was taller than they, and had the advantage of youth over Davy; but they were too muscular to remain long in his grip.

"I know you both. I am Caradoc Pennant," he cried, as the younger man got loose, and was about to attack him. "Was it for this I saved your life, Davy? For this Michael preached and Daisy read? Cowards! can you find no better way of life than by murder?"

"The Earl won't let us," growled Davy. "If we fish, he takes our haul; if we watch for waifs, he claims 'em; if we try one light, he tries another. He's a worse witch than the witch o' the Esgair, who hasn't put up her candle to-night. Come you, Master Carad, we 'ont be standing that. We're only

watching for the oyster boats as knows this corner for landing."

Caradoc had stamped his foot into the midst of the fire, which was already having a struggle with the wind to keep alight at all, and in spite of the efforts of the men to prevent him, succeeded in extinguishing it just about the time that Daisy blew out the Earl's candle. So all the lights, false and true, on that particular coast, were extinguished. Almost immediately Caradoc and the men heard the minute-gun.

"Has she struck?" asked Caradoc.

"No; she be too far ahead, by the sound," growled Davy.

"Then come with me to Monad, and put out the boats," cried Caradoc. "If you refuse I'll have you up before the justices to-morrow."

"The Earl will protect us and dumbfounder you, my lad. But I'll go if you promise not to tell, because you were saving my life," replied Davy, sulkily.

"I promise nothing; but I know you well, Davy, and you're not so bad as they say you are."

"If I'm bad, 'tis the Earl's fault. Come along, Shenkin. We shall all three break our necks; but if Master Carad don't mind, why, I don't, since he's clever enough to mend 'em again."

While the trio make their way towards Monad, under cover of the darkness, we must return to Daisy, who has just reached Brynhafod.

All there had been quiet up to that hour. The day had passed in harvesting, and slow, almost secret preparations for removal; the evening, so far, in an almost lethargic stillness. David Pennant had sunk back into his state of persistent fretting since the Earl's return—now showing the impulsive side of his character, now the obstinate—and only restrained from resistance by his filial respect and obedience. The minds of the others were engrossed in him, and every thought and action of every day tended, in some degree, towards him. He had been for more than an hour, in silence and gloom,

seated on the corner of the settle, his wife by his side, trying to comfort him by constantly wiping the tears from her eyes. This had been her way of showing sympathy from the first, in spite of Daisy's entreaties and Marget's scolding. The old farmer was quietly smoking his pipe in the chimney-corner, and Michael turning over the leaves of a book, and listening for Daisy and Caradoc.

Thus they were when Daisy burst in upon them, breathless with excitement and the wind; her headgear gone, her hair streaming over her shoulders.

"The gun! the gun! Father, Michael, there is a ship in distress!" she cried.

She had left both doors open, and the signal reached the ears of the inmates of the hall for the first time. All started up. Since the beacon had been set upon the Esgair, danger signals had been rare on that part of the coast. Light returned to David Pennant's eye, courage to his heart, strength to his sinews. He listened a moment, then went to the door and looked out.

"She is yonder. I see a light from a rocket or gun this side the Esgair," he cried. "We must go to Monad. Call the men, Michael. Prepare the ropes. Get ready, mother. She will never weather this gale."

David Pennant was himself again, the man we saw when first introduced to him. In less than five minutes he and his were prepared to save life, if possible. But on this occasion the old farmer was content to remain at home, while Michael accompanied his father. Years had brought the feebleness of old age to the one, the strength of manhood to the other; for Michael, though weak of body, was strong of soul, and no one ventured to obstruct him in the path of duty.

While the gale shook the gabled farm and threatened to uproot the trees and blow down the corn-stacks, the men sallied forth with their lanterns, and the old farmer and the women alone remained behind. The latter busied themselves in preparations, although they scarcely believed the ship-

wrecked, if saved, could reach Brynhafod from Monad on such a night. It was a mile beyond the bay where Daisy was wrecked. All asked where Carad was, and Daisy's anxiety about him was intense. Indeed, the events of her evening had been such as to make her almost incapable of further action, and she longed for him in order to confide them to another. Had the Earl met with him? Had they quarrelled? Or had he seen the struggling ship and gone to the beach?

He had gone to the beach as we know, and reached Monad with his companions, just as his father and his followers arrived. So strong a counter-force awed the wreckers, who were all astir, waiting for what might turn up. The Monad beach was a grim scene that night, while Caradoc went from one fisherman to another, urging them to put out to sea in the direction of the vessel, the lights in which were visible from the beach.

"Davy Jones, you are as good a pilot as there is in the country," said David Pennant. "If she isn't actually aground, you could pilot her round the Esgair. Where do you think she is?"

"Among the rocks by the quicksands," growled Davy. "Couldn't reach her in this wind. Blowing great guns!"

"I will go with you," cried Caradoc. "You know I can handle an oar with any of you, or could."

Meanwhile, Michael wandered from man to man, speaking "words that burn." His preaching had not been quite in vain, and he stimulated them to action by scriptural threats and promises. While he talked, and his father offered his "best corn-mow" to any one who should put out and either pilot or tow the vessel in, the wind lulled a little.

"Let us save her and cheat the Earl," cried David Pennant.

"Let us brave the wind, and not shirk the gale like a set of cowards!" exclaimed Caradoc, beginning to drag a boat towards the shelving beach, whence they launched her.

"Let us do the Lord's will, and trust in Him," said Michael, while another signal sounded, nearer than the last.

"Come along then, or she'll run aground. I'll do what the Pennants want, for they saved my life," said Davy Jones, helping Caradoc to push the boat.

"And I don't mind if I lend a hand," said Davy's nephew, and one or two other fishermen, and the boat was manned, Caradoc leaping in first and seizing an oar.

They pushed her into the sea in the wind and dark, and while she bravely rode the stormy billows in the direction of the dim light and sound from the ship, sturdily pulled on by her resolute crew, David Pennant and the others watched anxiously from the beach. And at that moment, old Mr. Pennant and the women were engaged in prayer at the farm.

CHAPTER XL.

RETRIBUTION.

WHILE the boat was making for the ship, and its friends watching and praying, the Earl of Craigavon was in his Tower, reviewing the events of the day. The last, naturally, was the most prominent, and he thought much of Daisy, chief actor in it. He reflected that she had discovered a secret which he had jealously guarded for years. If he had for ever extinguished her witch's fire, she had put out his *canwyll corff*. If he denounced her as a witch, she might pronounce him a wizard. He supposed that the world would credit an Earl before a wretched foundling; still he did not care to be exposed to it as a possible wrecker. If brought to the point he could of course say what he tried hard to believe—that he had used the lantern to light him across the cliffs—but who would credit him? He justified to himself the deceit he had practised, and the evil results of it, by thinking that he had only sought to render the false lights of the wreckers abortive, and to secure his own dues, by using a light himself. But still such conscience as remained to him pricked him, and the echo of certain piteous cries, heard in the dead of night, pierced him through and through. The thought of his son always consoled him, but with him was now associated Daisy, the recollection of whom was worse than a nightmare. Even if he could credit her assurance that she would not marry Penruddock, he knew that his son loved her, and his happiness and advancement were dearer to him than all *but* life. He could not face death, even for him! Should he let him marry the girl, and so bind her over to

secrecy? Hatred and pride forbade. He was to meet Penruddock shortly in town, and then he would find out whether he had forgotten her for some more suitable beauty. But the idea of town recalled the elopement of his daughter and the consequent death of his wife. Turn where he would, he met disappointment and distress.

In spite of his morose, unforgiving nature, he was rather sore than angered towards Lady Mona, and still sorrowful for the Countess. To see him, no one would have believed this, but he was himself conscious of it when he ruminated over the past. Still sorer and more sorrowful was he when he remembered Sir George Walpole, and that his money might have been added to the riches of the Craigavons. He was, however, comforted by the recollection that Sir George was even then in the Mediterranean, yachting with Penruddock, and that it was not unlikely that the nabob might make him his heir, in default of nearer relatives, for they claimed cousinship in some remote degree.

The idea of gold recalled the Earl to the present time and place, and while listening to the winds that ran riot about his Tower, and the waves that they tossed up and down like so many shuttlecocks, he remembered the gun that he had heard when he parted from Daisy. If other signals had succeeded them, the boisterous equinoctial had carried the sounds away from him, for he had not heard them. He had extinguished the beacon on the Esgair, and hung out his own instead, so there was probably a wreck somewhere, and the waifs were his. He had left strict orders with that timorous fool, Evan, to look after them, and see that his other myrmidons did the same; but he would be up with the dawn himself, to be sure that he was not cheated of his rights.

Having now his establishment at the Castle he went downstairs to his solitary supper—for in those days a nine o'clock meal was supper, not dinner, and he had dined early. Although the repast was singularly frugal, it was laid with all the pomp of plate and china. There was no superfluity of light, a candle at

either elbow serving him to see what he ate; but he was waited on by a couple of powdered domestics, retained more on Lord Penruddock's account than his own—for he was about to get rid of such superfluous servants as had belonged particularly to the Countess. When he had finished his meal he walked restlessly from room to room, giving orders and prying into odd corners. His words were always so few and commanding that, whether pleasant or unpleasant to his hearers, they never dared to contradict them. So when he complained of this unbarred door, or that needless waste, no one ventured to make excuses. He finally summoned Morris, and bade her accompany him to her lady's rooms. He, like the rest of us, was a strange anomaly. He could not summon courage to go there alone, yet had visited the Countess's apartments the last thing at night ever since his return. Morris remained near the door while he walked through the familiar tapestried room, candle in hand, and paused before three exquisitely-painted miniatures that hung above the mantelpiece. They were likenesses of the Countess and her children. He looked at his son's last, then passed Morris, and left the room quietly. When he finally retired to his Tower for the night, his valet duly came to him, and was dismissed with an order to tell certain men to be astir early, as there would be probably wreckage and fallen timber to look after. Then he locked his door and sat down to his accounts. It was late when he went to bed, and the winds had somewhat abated. He lay long awake, thinking of his son, and, in spite of himself, of Daisy and the lights. When he dozed off he dreamed that Lord Penruddock and Daisy were married, and that Lady Mona was bridesmaid. He did not usually dream such cheerful dreams, and when he awoke from it he almost wished it real—but a vision of Daisy on horseback, and her words, "They were drowned; I was perhaps saved to avenge them!" dispelled the brightness, and restored the gloom.

We might describe how the miser-earl—the wrecker-lord, started in his sleep and clutched at some weapon that lay by his side; but the restlessness of the wicked is best pictured by the

psalmist as "like a troubled sea that cannot rest," and the Earl's sleep was fitful and uneasy as the ocean that surrounded him.

He arose, as he had resolved, at daybreak, and dressed hastily. No prayers for a Father's care or daily bread passed his lips, but rather curses on the innocent girl who haunted his thoughts as well as path, and whose life, from the time she was cast upon the beach below the Castle till his encounter with her the previous evening, passed before his mind. Strange to say, when he descended the rocky, private path to Ton Bay, he fancied he saw her figure descending the hill in the direction of Brynhafod. He was right; Daisy, like himself, was abroad, for Caradoc had not yet returned, and she could not rest in uncertainty.

When they left their respective abodes, it was between seven and eight o'clock. It was a dark, misty morning, and although the sun had risen according to his custom, he was veiled by vapour, which, rolling up the hills, had just passed over Brynhafod and its fields, and was ascending to the mountain-top before dispersing in the sunlight. The wind was still high, but not so powerful as during the night, and the rough sea was consequently calmer also. Neither ship nor boat was visible on its bosom, which heaved and swelled incessantly, yet displayed neither waves nor foam. It was a dull, grey, cold, cheerless, autumnal morning, and the Earl shivered as he wandered down the path, and passed the little gate where Daisy parted from the Lady Mona.

The Earl picked his way through stones and brushwood that the winds had scattered until he reached the bay. He paused to look across the turbid, troubled sea through a field-glass, which he always carried, but nothing was visible on its breast save the sea-mews, restlessly fluttering and dipping their wings here and there. He was suddenly attracted from his survey by a strange whining cry, which he at first attributed to a gull hovering near; but afterwards discovered to come from a distance. He glanced across the bay at the rocks and beach opposite the Castle, and thought he saw some sort of dark figure.

The tide had been lately at its full, but was now ebbing, so he was able to cross the sands, which he found unstrewn with any wreckage. Indeed he knew that, if there had been a wreck the previous night, it must have happened farther down the coast. Ton Bay was of considerable width, so it took him some time to go round it beneath the rock, particularly as he walked at leisure, his eyes on the ground. Midway, he heard another whining cry, and glancing up assured himself that it proceeded from a large dog, at the extremity of the bay, not far from the road that led to Brynhafod.

"It is doubtless Pennant's beast," he muttered, and walked on.

As he drew nearer he saw that it was indeed Gwylfa, standing on the beach, not far from the receding waves. The Earl fancied he was watching something, but what he could not tell, for his large, shaggy back was between him and the object of his care. His lordship hastened his pace a little, and was not long before he discovered that the good dog was standing over the prostrate figure of a man.

"Drowned!" he exclaimed; first withdrawing a few steps, then again advancing.

Gwylfa became conscious of his proximity, and turning his head, ran to meet him. This was unusual, for the dog, like his masters, generally avoided the Earl. On this occasion, however, he put his wet paw on his arm, and looked wistfully into his face, with a whine so pitiful that it seemed to pierce the very rocks and stones. There was a feeling more than human in his large, soft eyes that looked as if they were shedding tears of tender compassion. Oh! if he could but have spoken, what passionate, touching words he would have said! Turning his great, dripping head from the Earl to the figure on the sands, he used now one paw, now the other, as if to draw him towards it. His lordship hesitated, but went slowly. As he approached he perceived that the form Gwylfa had left was immovable. It was that of a tall man, dressed as a gentleman. The back was towards the Earl; the face, apparently, buried in the sands.

"It must be the dog's master, Caradoc Pennant," exclaimed the Earl, with a sort of grim chuckle.

Gwylfa looked at him as if he understood him, gave another shrill whine, and tried to drag him onwards by seizing his coat with his teeth.

The Earl had seen many drowned men, and even watched and aided his dependents in removing what was valuable from their persons, in order, he said, to execute justice; but there was something here that made him quail. He stood at a distance, the dog between him and the figure; half inclined to turn back and send some servant to the spot. But either his greed or Gwylfa's teeth prevailed, and he went up to it. No sooner was he near than Gwylfa let him go, and placed his paw on the drowned figure, fixing his eyes, full of a sort of yearning, entreating pity, on his lordship.

"He may not be dead," murmured the Earl, stooping over the body.

He could not see the face, but a jewel glittered on the half-concealed hand. He seemed about to move the long, damp figure, when Gwylfa gave a shrill bark, and bounded up the beach towards the road, pushed through the fence, and disappeared.

The Earl was alone with the drowned.

"It must be that Pennant!" he muttered, summoning courage to turn the body.

What did he see? He started back and grew ghastly pale. He uttered a cry that echoed through the rocks, over the swelling sea, and up to the grim bulwarks of his majestic castle. He uplifted his arms and staggered like a drunken man; he fixed his eyes upon the face he had upturned until they became glazed by the paralysis of sudden agony; then his hands fell helplessly, his body bent, and with another cry that must have pierced, not earth only, but heaven, he fell, as dead, upon the drowned man at his feet. He had extinguished the beacon—he had held out the false light—and he had looked on the dead face of his own and only son!

CHAPTER XLI.

"TAKE HIM UP TENDERLY."

GWYLFA had left the beach, and his sad service there, to meet Daisy, whom he had seen on the hill. She was about to take the cliff-path to Monad, in the hope of hearing something of Caradoc, when the good dog reached her. She saw that he had been in the sea, and her first word was "Carad." Her second, "Where is he, Gwylfa? Where?" For answer, he looked at her pitifully, and then turned towards the beach—made a few steps—returned—wagged his great, wet, fringy tail—touched her with his paw—laid hold of her dress, and made her understand that she must change her plans and follow him. She did so in much fear, and they went, as quickly as they could, down the stony mountain road that led from the farm to the bay. When they reached the rough fence that was put to resist the inroads of the sea, Gwylfa was over at once, but Daisy paused before the stone stile and glanced after him. What she saw on the beach below chilled her like ice. Two bodies, apparently face to face, the arms of the topmost round the other, just as if they had been so cast up by the sea. Her agony was, for the moment, so great, that she feared she must fall from the stony eminence on which she stood; for she could think only of Carad. Gwylfa stood between her and the prostrate figures, as if to urge her on, but she could not move. She fancied she recognised the Earl's tall, slim form in the uppermost, and having watched him descend the rock, her fancy grew into certainty; but what of the other? Was it Carad? At first she thought it was, and, under any circumstances, the ship he sought to save must

have been wrecked, for had not this man been cast ashore? But, gazing intently, she thought she saw locks of fair hair beneath the grey head of him she believed to be the Earl; and Carad's hair was black. A whine from Gwylfa reached her, and she made a great effort to answer it by joining him. No woman could be braver than she was, yet she felt paralysed with a terror that the thought of the drowned always caused her. She mastered it at last, and, with a white face and cold trembling limbs, went down the steep fence. She and Gwylfa reached the melancholy pair together, and the tender dog began to lick the one cheek alone visible.

Daisy laid her hand gently on the Earl, whose clothes she saw were dry, and said, "My lord! For pity's sake, rouse up, my lord!" but neither movement nor sound responded to her touch or speech. One look at what was visible of *that other* sufficed; she recognised him who had loved her! With a piercing cry she sprang up the beach, re-crossed the fence, and looked about wildly for help. She would not believe that they were dead, though they might be before she could get aid, and the farm was three quarters of a mile from the beach. She gained the highest point of the cliff, and shouted as loud as terror would let her. She saw a man hastening from the Monad side, and ran towards him.

"Oh, thank God! thank God, it is you, Carad!" she cried, and threw her arms round him, forgetting all but that he was safe.

He held her a moment, and kissed her tenderly; then, seeing her blanched face, and feeling how she trembled, asked her what was the matter. She could not answer, she could only point to the beach below.

"What is it, dear?" he said, still holding her while she tried to regain self-possession.

"The Earl! Lord Penruddock!" she muttered at last.

"What of Lord Penruddock?" he asked. "We saved his yacht and Sir George Walpole, and the pilot and part of the crew. But he had insisted on rowing to the Castle, in spite of

the wind, while the vessel made for the harbour. The boat struck on the quicksands, capsized, and the two sailors swam ashore; but we cannot find his lordship. We are in search of him. I know he cannot swim. Have you seen him, Daisy, darling?"

As he spoke the terrified girl only clung the closer to him, and pointing to the beach, answered, "There! There! The beacon—the *canwyll corff*—the Esgair!"

"Our light was put out, and the pilot did not know where to steer. The corpse-candle was seen, and probably deluded him and the sailors in the boat—but have you seen Lord Penruddock?"

Daisy, recovering herself with a great effort, clasped her hands, and, turning her horror-stricken eyes upon Caradoc, said, "Oh, Carad! It is too terrible. The Earl and he lie together down there on the sands!"

Caradoc, understanding nothing, hurried down the cliff to the fence, followed by Daisy.

What he saw we know.

"Go home, Daisy, darling," he said to the staggering girl. "Take courage. Send the men. Send every one. I have restoratives with me. I shall revive them. They are probably still alive."

He leapt the fence, and she, touched by a gleam of hope, hastened to the farm.

Caradoc's compassionate heart sank when he drew near the father and son. It was, indeed, a pitiful sight—too harrowing for minute description. He found that the one, though stunned or paralysed, still lived; the other was too surely dead. Using all his strength and all his tenderness he separated them. In doing so his hot tears fell on the fair, upturned face of his former rival, and he would almost have given his life—nay, Daisy herself—to hear him speak again. But words would never again pass the lips of him so lately rich in beauty, health, and all that the world most covets. The body alone was there, and what of the soul?

Caradoc reverently closed the dimmed eyes, and threw his handkerchief over the white face; then drew the Earl, with great difficulty, to a distance. But Gwylfa still kept watch by the drowned.

All that Caradoc could do was to keep the spark from going out in the Earl's flickering lamp. But for his belief in an eternity of misery for such as die unrepentant, he could almost have wished it extinguished—he dreaded so much the rekindling of the wick. He remained beside him, feeling his pulse, and administering such stimulants as he fortunately had with him, until help came. As he expected, his father arrived first, but was soon followed by Michael and the farm men, bearing hurdles, blankets, a large chair, and everything they could suppose available for transporting those of whom Daisy had spoken with suppressed terror and agony.

David Pennant went from unconscious father to dead son, his soul cowed by grief and self-reproach, but every evil feeling departed.

"Take him up tenderly. Lift him with care," he said, using unconsciously words that were years afterwards to bring tears from many an eye. "May God comfort his afflicted father! Bear him to the Castle first, out of his sight. Nay, let me uplift him, and help to carry his bier."

The awe-stricken men obeyed the orders, and while Michael outspread the blankets and coverlets as for one asleep, they laid him, who slept only too well, in their midst, and bore him to the Castle, David Pennant taking the head of the bier, and Gwylfa following. It was a melancholy procession indeed.

Then Caradoc, Michael, and some other men uplifted the Earl, with some difficulty, and placed him in the large chair. His stony eyes unclosed during the task, but he did not recover consciousness. The two brothers placed themselves on either side, the men at the back; and so they carried the Earl of Craigavon to the Castle, after his drowned son.

CHAPTER XLII.

"FOUND DROWNED!"

"FOUND drowned!" was the verdict passed by the coroner at the inquest held on Lord Penruddock. No one appeared to be in fault. His lordship had returned from the Mediterranean in his yacht, accompanied by Sir George Walpole and a competent crew. They had been cruising about the Welsh coast, and had finally determined to visit Craigavon Castle. In making for the nearest port, they had to pass the bays and the quicksands already alluded to, which Lord Penruddock supposed he knew well, and with the situation of which the pilot was also acquainted. Although the wind had risen and the evening was advancing, his lordship resolved to row to the Castle, and left the yacht, with two of his crew, in the boat. Both Sir George and the pilot tried to dissuade him from this; but in vain. He said he had particular reasons for wishing to be at home without delay; and as there was no anchorage for the vessel in Ton Bay, and danger if she made for it off the quicksands, he preferred taking to the boat. The yacht and her boat therefore parted company at about five o'clock in the afternoon. The yacht was much tossed about by winds and waves, and made little way before nightfall. Then, as we know, the beacon on the Esgair was extinguished, and she was unable to pass that point. The false fire kindled by the wreckers drew her towards the quicksands, and hence the signals of distress heard on land. Caradoc had put out the fire, and so saved her from actually striking; but she was in the midst of rocks and shoals

as dangerous as the sands. When Caradoc, Davy Jones, and the others reached her, the pilot was in despair; but Davy managed to put her about, knowing, as Caradoc had said, the coast as well by night as by day. So the Earl's purposes were again defeated by Caradoc, and, had the Esgair light remained, there would have been no peril to ship or boat.

The fate of the boat was made clear by the terrified sailors. They had weathered the gale till evening deepened, and had seen the beacon, which warned them from the quicksands. But when it suddenly disappeared, and the gale increased, they could do little but lie upon their oars. Lord Penruddock encouraged them by the assurance that they were surely drifting towards the landing-place in Ton Bay; but a light appeared in the distance, and his lordship, who was acting as steersman, moved the helm towards it. Soon afterwards the boat struck, capsized, and the sailors knew no more of the hapless Lord Penruddock. They could swim, he was at best a bad swimmer; but it was dark, and they lost sight of him altogether. They managed to cling to the keel of the boat until day-dawn, when they saw the yacht at no great distance. They had previously heard her signals. Happily a sailor on the look-out saw them also. Caradoc and his crew were on board the yacht, their boat alongside; so the boat was put out and saved them. All saved, except the young lord! Inquiries concerning him resulted in Caradoc and the boatmen returning to Monad to institute immediate search; while the yacht, having righted her boat, cruised about in the vague hope of finding him. The rest we already know.

"Drowned by the judgment of God!" might have been the coroner's verdict. But Caradoc Pennant, who had found the body and helped to remove the Earl, was silent concerning the awful facts that he and Daisy alone knew. Not even to one another did they admit that the wretched Earl of Craigavon had been the instrument in drowning his only son; and when it afterwards slowly and secretly evolved, as such things will, it was through no word of theirs, but through hints of wreckers

and men who served, but did not love, the miserable lord of the manor.

And where was he during the solemn, silent, melancholy days that succeeded the event? He lay upon his bed, and neither spoke nor moved. Caradoc, who, by tacit consent, attended him, was sure that he was conscious; but he noticed no one. They kept that flickering flame of life alight in him as best they could; but by no agency of his. Whispering passed around him concerning what was going on in the Castle, but if he understood he made no sign. While his son lay in state in a state-chamber, he lay in despair in his lonely Tower. He no longer superintended the locking-up of doors, for all was open in the haste and awe of the moment. If there was the hush as of death in his Tower, there was the movement of life where death really was; for, as we said, the young lord lay in state. And this meant that his mortal remains were placed on a catafalque draped in white satin, in the centre of a state apartment, also hung with white; that tapers burnt, and watchers watched, day and night, while people from far and near passed and repassed the white, motionless form to see the remains of him so lately endowed with the elasticity of youth and health.

On the night preceding the funeral, Caradoc sat up with the Earl. Believing that his lordship really slept, he sent his valet to bed, and remained alone with him. Towards morning the Earl grew restless, and, to his doctor's great relief, began to mutter; then slowly opened his eyes. Caradoc went to him.

"I will arise," he said. "Bring my clothes; I shall attend the funeral!"

Caradoc was careful to express neither surprise nor dissent, but simply obeyed. The valet, hearing voices, came in from the next room, and they helped the Earl to leave his bed and dress. He seemed quite himself—stern and unapproachable as ever.

"Let me know the hour, and now leave me," he said. And they did so.

He was ready when summoned, and followed his dead son, as chief mourner, alone; for not even did Sir George Walpole venture to approach him. Although no invitations had been sent, the funeral procession reached from the Castle to the parish church, and in the rear of the white-plumed hearse and lonely father, were all the aristocracy of the county, and all the tenantry of Craigavon. Every one was anxious to express sympathy with a bereaved parent under circumstances so supremely sad.

The vault in the chancel of the old church had been opened to receive the heir of the Craigavons. The Earl stood over it, rigid as a statue, stern as death. The burial service had no meaning for him; and he heard, without realizing, the hopeful words, "I am the resurrection and the life!" Yet no one doubted that he felt, while all marvelled at his self-control. Many a sob echoed through the sacred building from the impressionable people who were assembled to witness the last rites; but neither sob nor tear moved the breast or bedewed the eyes of him who had lost all that he held most dear, and who stood silently contemplating his coffin. Brutus was not calmer or sterner when he condemned his sons to die.

But, when all was over, the Earl did not leave the tomb. The assembled multitude dispersed by degrees, carriages drove off, the mounted tenantry rode softly away, even the peasantry loitered to a distance to discuss the death and pageant, the nodding hearse vanished, and at last only one carriage remained near the church. This was drawn by four black horses, caparisoned with white plumes, and awaited the sonless lord. He stood almost alone in the chancel, under the painted window, gazing down into the vault that now held the mortal remains of his son. Beneath, mouldered the dust of his ancestors; around, their emblazoned monuments; but his boy! his beloved! He who should have represented the power, wealth, antiquity of his race—he was hidden from his sight for ever! Who shall paint the agony of the last Lord of Craigavon?

Mr. Tudor, in his white surplice, alone retained his place in

the chancel, but even he withdrew to a distance from the stricken father. Sir George Walpole and Caradoc stood by the old carved screen, near the pulpit and reading-desk, which were draped in heavy black. An intense compassion filled their hearts, yet they dared not approach him. After a long, silent interval, however, Caradoc thought he saw him totter, and went at once towards him. But for his support, the Earl would have fallen into the vault.

"Let me entreat you to come away, my lord," he said.

A heavy sob was the response; and they assisted the desolate man back to the mourning coach, into which, unasked, yet unrepulsed, Caradoc Pennant followed him, with the whispered words, "Forgive me, my lord, but you must not be alone!" He was right, for the Earl relapsed into temporary unconsciousness—perhaps the happiest state for him; and Caradoc deemed it his duty to remain by him until he recovered. This his lordship did before he reached the Castle, and his step was firm when he descended from the carriage.

"Thank you. I will summon you if I need you again," he said to Caradoc; and passed, like a grim ghost, through his domestics.

They, clad in black, and really sorrowing for the gay young master they had lost, watched him disappear into his private tower, and heard him turn the accustomed key after him. For some hours they crept to and from his closed door, listening. It was a relief to them all to hear groans and footfalls within, but no one ventured to knock. At last his bell rang, and Morris answered it, for every one else held back. He was pacing the room.

"Bring me the effects found in Lord Penruddock's pockets," he said, his back to the door he had unlocked.

Morris went to Mr. Tudor, who, representing his brother as steward, had taken up his temporary abode at the Castle. What had been found on Lord Penruddock had been carefully packed up and locked away. Mr. Tudor took it himself to Lord Craigavon.

"Can I be of service, my lord?" he asked, hesitating, as he placed the parcel in the Earl's hands.

"No, thank you," was the stern reply.

Before long the bell rang again.

"Send Dr. Pennant!" was the command, given in a voice strangely different from the Earl's.

"He has returned home, my lord," was the reply.

"Fetch him," said the Earl, closing the door.

It was some time before Caradoc could be found, but when the messenger reached him he hastened to the Castle. The Earl admitted him at once, by an imperative "Come in!" His lordship was seated before a table, on which were outspread a gold watch and chain, a diamond ring, a purse, a handkerchief, a few letters and papers, and a book. The latter was open beneath his face, covered by both hands. Caradoc stood awhile, in sympathetic silence, opposite. At first he thought the Earl's natural avarice had returned; but the purse was closed, and the valuables pushed aside. The book and papers were the points of interest. He spoke at last in a voice so husky that the words were scarcely audible, and Caradoc did not understand him. Then he pointed with his finger to the title-page of the book on which his eyes were fixed.

"Who—wrote—that?" he asked slowly, and with difficulty.

Caradoc moved, and glanced over his shoulder. He saw, to his surprise, the words, "Daisy Pennant," written in Daisy's clear roundhand, above the printed title—"Holy Bible."

"It is my sister's writing, my lord," he replied, his voice slightly changing with not unnatural emotion.

"You—mean—the foundling?"

"Yes, my lord."

"Bring her—to me. Now. At once."

"She may not like to come, my lord," said Caradoc, hesitating. "Sir George Walpole asks to see you, and——"

"I will not see him. I cannot have him here. Tell the foundling I will not harm her. Bid her forget——" A sob

choked the Earl's voice. "Go; ask her!" he added, with the tremulous eagerness of an appeal.

"I will, my lord. But may I not help you—stay with you?" returned Caradoc, touched by the piteous sob from this stern, immovable man.

"Thank you; no! Stay—on—at—the farm, at present. I may—need you."

Caradoc withdrew, scarcely understanding what was meant. It was Michaelmas-day; but the death and funeral of Lord Penruddock had stayed the intended move from Brynhafod—had, indeed, paralysed the neighbourhood. He sought Mr. Tudor, and repeated the Earl's words. Mr. Tudor entreated him to advise his father not to leave the farm. Sir George Walpole was with him, and Caradoc told him that the Earl seemed to dread an interview with him. Sir George immediately expressed his resolution to leave the Castle, and asked Caradoc abruptly if he thought his father and mother would give him a lodging for a few days, while he settled his future plans.

"I should wish to be near Lord Craigavon, in case of his needing me," he said; "but I will not remain here. I hear your house is a refuge for the destitute, and, as I have no settled home just now, I am of that class. I shall then, perhaps, see your friend Ap Adam, and I can give Lady Mona news of her father. She writes to me in great distress at her brother's death."

Caradoc said that Brynhafod was in confusion, owing to the contemplated move, but that he was sure his mother would manage to provide a bed for him.

"I have been accustomed to rough it, and any kind of shake-down will do," replied Sir George. "I cannot leave an old friend in such a wretched plight; yet I know him too well to force myself upon him."

Sir George accompanied Caradoc to Brynhafod, and was received with the unaffected hospitality for which the Pennants were noted. They were seated at their early evening meal,

the Master alone being absent. The solemn scenes of the past week had worked a change for the better in David Pennant, whose morose anger towards the Earl had merged into a tender pity. He had forgotten his own wrongs, and his continual cry was, "If only I could do something for his lordship!" and the power to receive Sir George seemed to him that "something."

When Caradoc told him and the others what the Earl had said touching their continuing at the farm for the present, the hush of a deep thankfulness fell on all; and when this intelligence was followed by his lordship's wish to see Daisy—owing apparently to her Bible and her name—their surprise and emotion were heightened. An expression of awe had been left on Daisy's face by the sight she had seen on the beach; and a terror of the Earl had sunk into her heart ever since their encounter on the cliff, increased, if possible, by his dread lantern. When she heard that he wished to see her, she turned pale and trembled; and no one but Caradoc fully understood why.

"Thou art not afraid, my Eye of Day?" said old Mr. Pennant. "Maybe thou and thy Bible may comfort his lordship, as I pray you may both have comforted his son: for the Holy Word was his companion when he 'fell into deep waters.'"

"And a holy peace was on his countenance as he slept the sleep of death," remarked Sir George, moving towards her, and standing at the back of her chair. "I think I have seen him reading your Book more than once, though he closed and concealed it when I drew near."

Daisy glanced up at Sir George, and tears were in her eyes. This "hero of a hundred fights" felt that his were not dry. He passed one hand before them, and laid the other on the head of the young girl, who had strangely impressed him. There was a momentary silence, while all present turned involuntarily towards them; then Daisy rose slowly, still looking white and fearful, and said,

"If you will be with me, Carad, I will go to his lordship; but I know not what I shall say."

"The Lord will give thee a mouth and wisdom, child; and may His grace be sufficient for thee!" said old Mr. Pennant.

So Daisy accompanied Caradoc, through the evening mists, back to the Castle.

CHAPTER XLIII.

REMORSE.

CARADOC found the Earl as he had left him—his elbows on the table, his forehead covered by his hands, and the Bible before him. But the Sacred Volume was opened at the centre, and not at the frontispiece. When his lordship became conscious of Daisy's presence, he glanced up at her, and motioned Caradoc away. She turned instinctively to her protector; but Lord Craigavon said, in a low, hollow voice,

"You are safe. Our struggle is over."

And she replied—

"I am not afraid, Carad; leave me with his lordship."

"I shall be in the adjoining room," whispered Caradoc; and left them together.

Daisy stood before the Earl with folded arms. She was still pale and awe-struck, but calm and self-possessed.

"Tell me how my son gained possession of this Book," he said, after a long pause, and without looking at her.

"He came to our house, my lord, and, before departing, asked me to give him something that belonged to me. I gave him that Bible, forgetting that my name was written in it."

"What did he say in return for your gift?"

"That he would read it for my sake; and I was so bold as to beg his lordship to read it for his own, because it was the Word of God. And I am told that he was seen reading it more than once. I pray that he may have been comforted and supported by it."

Daisy's voice faltered, and the Earl groaned,

"Are these your marks?" he asked, removing one hand from his eyes, and pointing to the page before him, upon which fell the light from a lamp.

"No, my lord," she replied, glancing down upon the Bible, and perceiving that a verse here and there was lined in the fourteenth chapter of St. John.

"A strange love-token!" muttered the Earl.

"It was no love-token, my lord. If my Lord Penruddock honoured me by some slight preference, neither by word nor deed did I encourage him. It was, and still is, a sore grief to me; all the sorer because it angered your lordship against me."

"You entrapped and desired to wed him."

"Not so, my lord. I told him that even with your consent I could not marry him. We were suited neither by rank nor training; and indeed, my lord, I did not love him, though he was ever courteous and honourable to me."

There was a sympathetic tone in Daisy's clear voice that made the Earl once more glance up. The expression of his face was so painful that it drew her nearer to him, and she said, as if impelled by some uncontrollable feeling,

"Oh! my lord, if only you knew how our hearts ache for you, and how we pray for you day and night!"

"We! Who?" groaned the Earl.

"Grandfather and father, and all at the farm, my lord. We ask God to console you in your sorrow, since no one else can."

Lord Craigavon's head sank lower and lower, and Daisy fancied she saw a tear fall on the damp page of the open Bible. He was suddenly awakened to a consciousness that the very people he had been so long seeking to injure and expel from his property, had not only borne him and his dead son to the Castle, and tended them there, but were actually praying for him still. The girl whom he had rendered friendless and homeless, spoke to him with a sympathy that he could not misunderstand; she who knew his guilt, and the

terrible injury he had done to her and others in his avarice, was by his side, compassionating his woe. In spite of his crimes, they pitied him! The proud, unapproachable man was touched, and his human heart softened. He leaned his head on the Word of God, and burst into tears.

Daisy stole nearer to him, and clasping her hands, prayed for him. She knew that it was about the time of family worship at the farm, and that her friends there would also ask for him pardon and peace. The drear silence of the Tower was broken by its master's sobs and groans, which had uncontrollably burst their bounds, in spite of Daisy's presence. Caradoc, hearing, crept in; but seeing the bowed head of the stricken lord, and the upturned eyes of the young girl, silently praying, returned to his place, and joined his petitions to hers. He believed that his task as physician of the body was done now that the grief and remorse had found an outlet, and he asked the Great Physician of the soul to minister instead.

Daisy could not tell how long she stood by the Earl, dreading to move, lest she should break in upon his agony. But she was conscious that the night deepened without, that the Castle clock struck nine, that a melancholy owl hooted, and that the winds and waves seemed to lament together The lamp burnt dimly, casting a dull glare on the bowed head, and just flickering on the diamond and the gold which lay beneath it; while Daisy was partly in shadow, and the ancient room and quaint furniture were almost in obscurity.

At last a thought darted, like an electric message, through Daisy's mind. "Had it flashed there from Heaven?" she asked.

Doubting, trembling, she delivered it.

"The Lady Mona is in sore distress, and pines to see your lordship," she said, low and slow, stooping over the Earl.

He started as if an electric shock had struck him, but made no response. He had possibly forgotten this daughter, who had ever been second to his son. But with her name returned the memory of the Countess, also swept into forgetfulness by

the terrible waves of sin and grief. Daisy began to feel that she was no longer needed, and moved, as if about to leave. This aroused the Earl, and, controlling his emotion, he raised his head, and finally leaned back in his chair, fixing his eyes, now softened by tears, on her. But they were instantly cast down. The grand figure and lovely face served only to prick his dulled yet awakening conscience.

"It is late. We had, perhaps, better return home, my lord," she said, naturally.

"Are you afraid?" he asked, sternness coming back.

"No; I have no fear. I will remain if your lordship wills," she replied.

"Who told you of my daughter? And how had you the courage to name her?" he asked, hesitating strangely.

"Sir George Walpole and Miss Manent, my lord. And I think God gave me courage," she rejoined.

"Let her come," he said, and again leaned his head on his hand, over the open Bible.

"Good night, my lord. Good-bye!" said Daisy, fearing lest he should repent this permission.

"Good-bye," he repeated slowly; then, as if attacked by some inward terror, started back and cried, "You can be secret? You can——" he hesitated.

"Forgive, as I hope to be forgiven!" she supplied, with a solemn and touching dignity. "No word of the past shall be breathed by me, or by my brother Carad; and no one else knows."

As if to seal this promise she held out her hand. The Earl did not take it, and fearing that she had presumed, she was about to withdraw it, when he seized, and pressed it with the words, "Soiled—clean!".

Then he sank back in his chair, and she, beckoning Caradoc, left him to his remorse and to God.

CHAPTER XLIV.

RECONCILIATION.

"YOU shall not escape me again, Adam Perceval!" cried Sir George Walpole, at the top of his voice.

He had left the inmates of Brynhafod preparing for their Harvest Home, and had come to look at the now famous Esgair. He was sure that the man who nearly met him on the cliff-path, but who turned at sight of him, was our friend Ap Adam. He accordingly ran after him until he caught him. They were face to face at last.

"It is cowardly and unhandsome to dog a man's steps till you seize him like a bloodhound!" said Ap Adam, finding concealment no longer of use. "What can the great General Sir George Walpole want with me?"

"Your old friendship and your past history," replied Sir George, letting Ap Adam go, and looking at him kindly.

"The one you forfeited long ago; the other is not worth hearing," said the Master, coldly, withdrawing to a distance.

"Oh, Perceval! That sad jealousy and distrust should be buried with her we both loved," said Sir George, gravely. "Death, at least, should end the hot-headed quarrels of youth."

"Death! Is she dead?" exclaimed the Master, quickly.

"Yes; did you not know it?" replied Sir George, more calmly than his questioner.

What was an old, if cherished, sorrow to Sir George Walpole, was a new and sudden grief to Ap Adam. They had been friends in youth, and through a long chain of circum-

"Ran full speed after him."

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stances too intricate to unwind here, they had quarreled; and, when too late, Sir George discovered that Ap Adam had loved the lady he had married. They had never met since that marriage; and Sir George's long career in India had facilitated Ap Adam's estrangement; for, although he had heard of the renowned General by report, no news of him had ever reached Sir George.

"Who told you that I loved her?" asked the Master, after a long pause, during which he subdued his emotion.

"She told me, when too late; and I think she loved you best," replied Sir George. "But the past is past; and she was a good wife to me during our short time together."

These two men, both over the meridian of life, grew young again at these recollections. The Master's face flushed, and tears filled his eyes; while the soldier's heart beat fast at the painful admission he had made. Neither spoke for a time; then Ap Adam held out his hand, and said, "You are noble as ever, George Walpole; far nobler than I."

Sir George grasped the offered hand, and while still holding it, changed the subject, as if fearing that some unpleasant remembrance might jar the reconciliation. They did not return to it again, but avoided it, as one sometimes does what is uppermost.

"If I owned this property I would build a lighthouse on that point," exclaimed Sir George, abruptly, pointing to the Cader-y-Witch.

"So would I," rejoined the Master; and they stood some minutes, side by side, gazing at the back of the Cader as if their whole souls were in it, and not, as they actually were, in the memories of the past.

At last they turned, and walked slowly together up the mountain.

"Have you any reason for concealment? or may we return as old friends to the farm?" asked Sir George, when they paused to take breath and admire the view.

"Sit down here, and I will tell you," was the reply.

They seated themselves on the turf, while the Master told his story.

"After our quarrel," he began, "and when you had returned to India, I did not much care what became of me. Having neither relations nor friends, and but little money, I threw up doctoring, as I had before done law, and took to writing. No publisher would undertake my books, because they were either too learned, too dry, too quaint, too real, or too something or other. So writing followed physic and law. You know my craze for geology and antiquities. I determined to take a turn at them, having neither inclination, nor money, nor interest, when you left, for anything else. I considered myself badly treated by the world, so I thought I would leave it, and earn my daily bread by the sweat of my brow, while I hammered at the rocks and explored the old castles that came in my way. This brought me into Wales, a country rich in the lore I love best. I began at once to collect materials for a great work on the strata, flora, and other physical peculiarities of the country, which I have nearly completed."

"Nearly!" here interrupted the General. "One work in a dozen years, and not finished yet!"

"And, when finished, never likely to see the light," returned the Master, sadly.

"It shall, if money can do it! Go on," cried Sir George, energetically, and the Master continued:

"Money! Money! It is all money, from the wretched Earl of Craigavon to the distinguished General Walpole. I have laboured for love, and seen the fruit of my labours. If my great work die with me, my children will survive me."

"You are richer than I, after all," sighed Sir George.

"Well! My researches and my wanderings brought me to this neighbourhood, and I fell in with Carad, then a boy. I found him after my own heart, and attached myself to him. I almost forget how it came about, but for love of him, and because I began to want an object in life, I turned school-master. They asked me for my name, and as Perceval was

high-sounding, and as I was desirous to end my days in obscurity, I gave them my baptismal distinctive, adding thereto the Welsh Ap, or Son—and as my father's name was also Adam, I neither belied him nor myself.

Here Sir George laughed heartily, and declared that years had not improved his old friend.

"There you are mistaken," rejoined the Master. "They, and kindly Christian people, have wrought a great change in me, I hope. I have not lived at Brynhafod in vain. I believe the old man's advice would even have led me to seek you out after you came to the farm, had you not been visiting Lord Craigavon. I thought you must be changed, indeed, if you could make him your friend, miser and wrecker that he is!"

"What do you mean?" asked Sir George.

"More than I dare to express," replied the Master.

This led to a discussion of the late events, and Sir George was able to give the Master some details with which he was unacquainted, owing to his absence from Brynhafod since Lord Penruddock's death. He said frankly that he had absented himself because he had heard that Sir George was again in the country. He was, however, interested to hear of Daisy's visit to the Castle, and what little had transpired of the Earl's subsequent history.

"A whole month has elapsed," said Sir George, "and I am still dawdling about in the hope of being of some service to Lord Craigavon. But he has seen no one since your Daisy's visit. I have no doubt that Penruddock was in love with her, and I fancy the Earl knew it. Your Vicar tells us that he keeps himself shut up in his Tower, vacating one room when a servant comes to arrange it, and so avoiding intercourse with every one. His meals are laid in the eastern apartments while he is in the western; and he appears to wander from chamber to chamber, in order to avoid contact with his fellows. But he does not lock himself in, or interest himself in his affairs."

"That will come soon enough," interrupted the Master.

"I have written to summon his daughter, by his permission, given to Daisy," continued Sir George; "and when Lady Mona arrives I expect I shall go to the Castle. The Countess was a distant connection of mine, and I was with her when the shock of Lady Mona's elopement caused her death. I feel a natural interest in the survivors, if only on account of those who are gone. There were the makings of a fine character in Penruddock."

"As well, then, that he was taken before they were quite destroyed," said the Master.

Thus talking, the re-united friends sauntered together to Brynhafod, where they found great excitement, caused by the Harvest Home. The labourers, who had helped to save he golden grain, were assembled in the great farm kitchen, together with their families. A substantial supper was prepared for them, and they were seated at long tables, ready to enjoy it. Old Mr. Pennant had just said grace, David and his wife had begun to carve, and Michael, Daisy, and Marget to help, when Sir George and the Master entered, arm-in-arm. They met Daisy first.

"I have caught him at last, and he is my very friend, Adam Perceval," said Sir George, as Daisy glanced from one to the other inquiringly.

The Master shook hands with her hastily, then, seizing a huge knife and fork, began to carve a round of beef that he saw at no great distance. An irrepressible hurrah greeted him, for he was a favourite, and had done many a good turn to every individual gathered to the feast. When Daisy brought him a plate to fill, he said to her aside,

"We knew one another years ago, Sir George and I;" then added, with much earnestness, "What makes you look so ill, Daisy?"

"I am not ill," she replied, carrying her well-plenished plate to a child, and helping its mother to cut up the meat.

Yet she was not well. She had never been quite herself since that last interview with the Earl. Perhaps Caradoc may

have also had something to do with it, for, although he was kind, he was distant. She felt intuitively that her name, written on a book presented by her to one who avowed himself her lover, must appear strange to him, and she had not the courage to explain it. She had, besides, seen little of him. He had vacated his bedroom for Sir George Walpole, the "best room" having been dismantled, preparatory to the general move, and had slept in the house taken in the town. His professional calls also rapidly increased, and hence he had not been much at home during Sir George's stay.

He had promised to be at the Harvest Home, however, and Daisy was on the look-out for him. But, truth to tell, he had been jealous of that "Daisy Pennant," written on the fly-leaf of the Bible; for whether he absented himself or not, Daisy was ever in his mind—in thought by day, in dreams by night.

When he arrived at last, instead of avoiding her, he went up to her at once, with the words, "Daisy, Mr. Tudor writes to me to say that Lady Mona is at the Castle, and wishes to see you. She is not well, and I am also summoned. I will go at once. Perhaps to-morrow will be soon enough for you."

"I dread the Castle, Carad," said Daisy, sadness in her face. "You will come back for the Harvest Home? It may be our last here; and the Master has come with Sir George, and they are friends after all. Poor Lady Mona! It seems unkind; and oh! I would give much to see her! But the tragedy and the Castle gloom weigh down my spirit."

Caradoc looked into her face, and remarked its varying colour, and the strained expression of her eyes. He led her quietly out of the crowded kitchen, and into the old school-room hard by. All were so busily occupied that no one saw them, save Michael.

"Sit down in the Master's chair, Daisy, while I doctor you," said Caradoc, playfully. "I have never yet had that honour, and shall administer my first dose, proud of a new patient."

He took a bottle from his shelf, and gave her a little salt

volatile, which she swallowed obediently, then seated himself on the long form.

"You are master, I scholar, now," he said, seeing that her eyes resumed their natural expression. "It brings back the old times, Daisy, when you made us play at school; and Michael was always the best boy."

"And you the cleverest," returned Daisy, smiling. "I wish we had been always children, and that you had never left us. We have had so much sorrow of late, that I almost start at a rustling leaf."

"The terror has been worse for you than our personal trials," replied Caradoc. "Were you not very courageous, you could not have passed through those encounters with the unfortunate Earl as you did."

"But you were with me, and I did not mind, Carad," she rejoined, innocently. "You are so brave and strong."

"I wish I were, Daisy," he said, glancing at her, and restraining an impulse to tell her how gladly he would be still stronger and braver for her sake.

But it was always thus. No sooner did they relapse into the manners natural to them, and grew easy, as of old, than some sudden thought, either of Michael or Lord Penruddock, came to chill Caradoc's returning freedom, and make him stiff again. Any formality checked Daisy's natural manners and flow of spirits, and thus they were estranged, she knew not why.

"You are better now," he said, watching while the colour tinged her cheeks, and light gleamed in her eyes. "If you will keep quiet until I return, I will make haste back. Stay here, where no one will seek you, and I will bring you news of the Earl and Lady Mona. You have been over-wrought, dear Daisy."

"I will, Carad," she replied, the faint colour deepening.

He left her alone in the Master's old arm-chair. She sighed as she watched him depart, but there was a smile on her half-parted lips. Leaning back, and folding her hands on her lap, she tried to think; but her mind was exhausted by late

emotional events, and the uncertain state of her home. Confused visions of Caradoc, Sir George Walpole, the Master, Lady Mona, and the Earl chased away thought, and she insensibly fell asleep. She slept so heavily that she did not hear the door open, somewhat roughly, or see one of her visions come in. It was Sir George, who, missing her, had entered the first available room in search of her. He hurried up to her, thinking she was ill; but, perceiving that she slept, he took Caradoc's seat, and watched her. He could scarcely have looked upon a fairer or statelier picture. It was, perhaps, heightened by the quaint Welsh costume, and still quainter surroundings; and the imagination of the old soldier wandered through the school and farm life that had combined to form so well-educated, simple, healthful, and innocent a child of nature. He compared her with Lady Mona, and others whom he knew, and sighed to think how the world and bad example might sully the purity of youth; while the sight of natural objects, holy living, and simplicity could thus beautify, and even sanctify it.

"I will settle near them, and spend my money amongst the poor," he thought. "Adam Perceval can live with me, and these young people can cheer our old age. Why has one man children, while another is deprived of them? And I, who dearly love the young! Bless her! How calmly and innocently she sleeps!"

Daisy little thought how intently and lovingly she was watched, or by whom. She was still sleeping, when Caradoc returned, and found Sir George with her. At first he felt an angry jealousy of the interloper; but the soldier's imperative "Hush!" and therewith a certain air of command, dispelled it. He did not, however, choose that Daisy should be subjected to longer surveillance; so he aroused her by a light touch, and by the utterance of her name. But he, too, thought how fair she was in sleep.

She started and blushed at being so surprised; but Caradoc at once engaged her attention and Sir George's by telling them that Lady Mona had inquired for both, and wished to see them.

"Her ladyship is only nervous," he said. "Miss Manent is with her, and Morris, as of old; but she has not yet seen the Earl, who keeps resolutely to himself. Her feelings will not kill her, though she is grieved for her brother's death. I suppose she is heiress now he is gone, and thinks of her inheritance; but Craigavon is entailed on the male line, and the Earl is the only masculine representative of the family, so he can do what he likes with the property. I always thought Lady Mona selfish."

"She has been so unnaturally brought up," remarked Sir George; adding, as he glanced at Daisy—"All young people are not trained in pure morals and pure air."

CHAPTER XLV.

THE EARL'S HEIRESS.

THE Harvest Home went off unusually well, and when it was known that Sir George Walpole was a friend of the Master's, he was loudly cheered, and made a long speech in return, translated into Welsh by Caradoc. He had picked up a few Welsh words, which he used with effect, and his kindly listeners applauded with genuine politeness. He joined in the games that succeeded the feast, and made himself so much at home that the peasants could only wish that the Earl were like the Baronet. David Pennant had in part recovered his spirits; and when Big Ben rose to express the general hope that so long as Brynhafod stood, the Pennants might stand and dwell therein, he seconded it, but added that the blow which had fallen upon the Earl had been a warning to him not to set his heart on this world. When old Mr. Pennant, according to his time-honoured custom, concluded the evening by giving out a harvest hymn, and Daisy led it, feelings of gratitude and resignation to the Divine will were uppermost. While all prayed that the dreaded change and separations might be averted, they sought to feel submissive to higher direction, and a calm, partly mournful, partly happy, fell on the large assembly. Many of the Monad people had crept in, and Michael and Daisy saw, with satisfaction, that they behaved well, and joined in the singing. Their labours had not been in vain.

Early the following morning Daisy went alone to the Castle. It seemed strange to her to be ushered again into Lady Mona's old rooms, and to see her reclining, as usual, on a

sofa. Miss Manent was with her, and, but for the mourning dress, both looked much as in former days; only Miss Manent's face was brighter, her ladyship's a shade sadder. The latter shook hands with Daisy, and seemed pleased to see her again. She began to speak on indifferent subjects, and Daisy wondered at her calmness, remembering their parting, her mother and brother's subsequent death, and the Earl's state. By degrees, however, she turned the conversation to her brother, and asked Daisy, with a shudder, to give her an account of what she had witnessed. It was, in fact, for this that she had sent for her. Daisy could never think of the drowned lord without terror, and the request brought the nervous tension back to her eyes. She complied with it, nevertheless, and related, as calmly as she could, what she had seen on the beach. Lady Mona was affected, though she made a great effort at composure. Then her ladyship inquired concerning Daisy's interview with her father. This was more difficult to tell, and Daisy glanced at Miss Manent, who discreetly left the room. She confined herself to the episode of the Bible she had given to Lord Penruddock, and the Earl's desire to know who had written her name in it. She did not allude to their previous tumultuous encounters, nor to Lord Penruddock's attachment to herself. When she had ended, Lady Mona inquired to what influence she owed her own summons to the Castle? Daisy replied that, seeing the Earl bowed down with sorrow, she had ventured to speak her ladyship's name.

"What did the Earl say?" asked Lady Mona.

"He said, 'Let her come!'" replied Daisy.

"And now he will not see me," returned Lady Mona.

"His lordship is in the slough of despond, and, perhaps, if your ladyship went to him uncalled, you might gently draw him out of it," said Daisy, so simply that Lady Mona smiled.

"He is not one to be helped unasked," she said; "and you know I have offended him. Still I am his heiress, and he must consider me!"

Daisy now understood what Carad had meant by Lady Mona's selfishness, but she neither understood nor liked the tone of her last words. She replied, however, quite naturally,

"I think he would love you if you were kind and gentle with him."

Lady Mona glanced at Daisy, but the girl's looks and thoughts were away with the sinful, solitary Earl. A long silence ensued, during which Lady Mona continued to look at Daisy, in whose eyes she saw a tear. Her own softened, and a throng of recollections suddenly crowded her mind. She remembered that the Earl had disliked Daisy from the very day that she had been cast upon the beach; and yet the foundling wept for him.

"Do you recollect your first visit to the Castle, Daisy?" she asked abruptly.

"I think not, my lady," replied Daisy, roused from her reverie.

"I do; but I am older than you; and I do not forget that you lost a locket. Let us ask Miss Manent about it."

As Lady Mona rose to recall Miss Manent, her face flushed, and her manner changed. Something had suddenly troubled her, apart, seemingly, from personal grief, for she asked Miss Manent, hurriedly, the particulars of Daisy's first visit to the Castle. Miss Manent detailed them. Every minute circumstance was stamped upon her memory, since that day had been the one of her introduction to Brynhafod, and her dawn of love for Mr. Tudor. She said that she had herself carefully searched every corner of the rooms in which Daisy had been for the missing locket, and had questioned her concerning it, but in vain.

"Was any one suspected of stealing it?" asked Lady Mona.

"Oh! no, Lady Mona," replied Miss Manent, horrified at the idea.

"Was anything else saved that would prove your parentage?" asked Lady Mona.

"Only my battered doll," replied Daisy, smiling; "and she

would be a poor referee. But I am not likely to need one. Indeed, they seem to think my real parents were drowned, and——" here a vision of Lady Mona's father checked her further speech, for had he not been the instrument of their destruction?

"I will have a search, now that the Castle is at my command," said Lady Mona, half proudly, half hurriedly. "I should like to return to you the favour you have so strangely done me. Though I cannot yet understand how you prevailed on Lord Craigavon to permit my return."

The words, "the Castle at my command," struck both Miss Manent and Daisy as peculiar, knowing, as they did, that no one had ever given a command there but the Earl. Nevertheless, strange as it may seem, Lady Mona was suddenly its mistress. Mr. Tudor gladly resigned to her his assumed authority, and the Earl gave no sign of interest in any outward thing. Doors were unlocked, people came and went, and the gloomy place seemed to have found a new spring of life. But every one said that his lordship would require a strict reckoning when he once more came forth from his Tower.

Lady Mona's object was to maintain the power with which she found herself unexpectedly endowed, and to ensure her husband's presence at the Castle as well as her own. This might be achieved if the Earl continued his present life; and she not unnaturally speculated on the possibility of Captain Everard Soames and herself reigning while her father abdicated. They had been sufficiently happy during their short term of married life; and, but for the death of the Countess, Lady Mona would have had little save poverty to complain of. Although she did not attribute her mother's death to her own elopement, she had yet mourned for her sincerely. Indeed, it was scarcely attributable to that cause, though doubtless accelerated by it; for the Countess had held to life, at best, by a very frail thread.

When Lady Mona arrived at the Castle, she had found Morris ready to wait upon her; and it was to this faithful

Abigail that she was indebted for the intelligence that the Earl had spoken to no one since his son's death but Caradoc and Daisy. Hence it was that she had summoned them, and hence the searching questions she continued to put to Daisy.

Daisy had, however, little more to tell, and Caradoc had told still less when similarly interrogated the previous evening; for both were careful to screen the Earl from the investigations of his daughter. When Lady Mona found that she could gain no further information from Daisy, she turned her attention to Miss Manent; for she had not lost the insatiable curiosity of her girlhood. She inquired concerning Miss Manent's interview with the Earl after her elopement, and made lame excuses for her own conduct. She condescended to assure Miss Manent that Lady Thomas had as good as promised to engage her as governess, and that she was grieved to find that she had not fulfilled her engagement. This was not, however, true, since only a provisional promise had been given.

"It was all for the best, dear Lady Mona," said gentle Miss Manent. "Had I gone to Plâs I should not have spent that happy time at Brynhafod, and not have made the kind new friends I have found at Llanpeter Rectory. I am quite at home there, and my pupils, I think, really love me."

"And some one else also, I hear," returned Lady Mona, half sarcastically. "When is the wedding to take place?"

"That seems to depend upon the Earl," replied Miss Manent, blushing.

"Then you will die an old maid, for his lordship disapproves of matrimony; Daisy and I have experienced that," said Lady Mona, casting a searching glance at Daisy; then changing her tone as she recollected her brother. "But I am married, and perhaps you may be in the course of years. And what of you, Daisy? Morris says that old Sir George Walpole has located himself at your farm on your account."

"Your ladyship forgets who and what I am, and wherefore you sent for me!" said Daisy, with dignity. "Perhaps, if you have no further need of me, I may go."

"A few words more, Daisy," said Lady Mona, seriously. "I do not forget our parting at the rock gate, nor the comfort you were to me when I had no other. I hope you will settle at the farm, so that I may be of use to you by-and-by, when I am established here. I am glad you did not accompany me to London, for I did not really want either companion or maid. Will you tell Sir George Walpole that I will make arrangements for his coming here whenever he likes, and say I shall be glad to see him soon? I wish your harpist foster-brother would come and play beneath the Earl's windows. He loves music, and it might soothe him and bring him from his solitude; for, indeed, I dare not approach him. If Michael Pennant would take his harp to Ton Bay, beneath the Tower, he would be heard, and not seen, by his lordship, who would think him some wandering harper, and would not be annoyed. Owen is too old for the task."

"Poor old Owen is dead, my lady," said Daisy, sadly. "Father offered him a home, but he did not need it. He was ound dead with his arms encircling his harp. He must have fallen asleep while playing. Was it not a happy end?"

"To play your own requiem?" sighed Lady Mona, startled. "Suppose the Earl should be found so? Daisy, I will go to him at all risks. Can you help me?"

"I will pray for you and him, my lady; pray also yourself, and the Lord will be your guide."

So saying, Daisy quietly rose to take leave; and Lady Mona said, hurriedly, "Send your foster-brother, the harpist, to the bay. Let it be this afternoon, if possible."

CHAPTER XLVI.

HIS LORDSHIP'S SOLITUDE BROKEN.

"DAVID, the sweet psalmist of Israel, played upon his harp to King Saul when he was troubled in spirit," said old Mr. Pennant to Michael, when Daisy had delivered Lady Mona's request. "Perhaps thou mayst soothe his lordship's pain similarly, my lad. His Jonathan has been stricken, and he will not be comforted."

"I should fear rather to distress than please him, grandfather," replied Michael. "If I thought I could be of any comfort, of course I would go, but it seems a liberty on my part."

"Lady Mona should know best," suggested Daisy; "and if it only encourage her to seek the Earl, it will be good. Do you remember how Blondel played to Richard Cœur-de-Lion in his captivity? and what Shakespeare says of the power of music? and how the old poets praise it? and how often the Master bade you cultivate it, to refine and elevate the mind?"

Michael smiled, as he assured Daisy that her examples were sweet fictions, while the Earl was a sad reality. "But," he added, "there can be no harm in my carrying my harp to the bay, and playing to the waves, as you and I have often done before, Daisy. I scarcely think the sounds will reach the Earl's Tower; and, at any rate, he can never know who produces them. Will you come with me?"

Daisy said she would; and the young couple set out for Ton Bay, Michael carrying his harp, and Gwylfa following. It was a bright quiet October day, and they found the sea calm. Daisy had not had the courage to visit the spot since the fatal

morning, and she felt a sharp pain at her heart as she crossed the sands towards the Castle rock. They established themselves where they could not be seen from the Castle, and where, Michael believed, he could not be heard.

"I am only obeying orders, Daisy," he said, as he struck the first chords of a plaintive Welsh air.

He was always happy to have her to himself, whether they conversed or were silent—"discoursed sweet music" themselves, or listened to the music of Nature. So he played on, forgetting, after a time, that he was supposed to be soothing the sorrows of a gloomy lord, and, forgetting also, which was more wonderful still, such work as he had to do afield. He was still far from strong, and a constant anxiety to those who loved him; but he strove hard against weakness, whether bodily or mental, that he might pursue his labours in the farm, as well as his simple teachings amongst the sinful and ignorant. When Caradoc reasoned with him, he always said, "I must do my Master's work while it is called to-day," feeling how uncertain was the tenure of his life. This unpresuming, shy, diffident Michael was a hero; for he had made a greater conquest than the conquerors of nations have ever made—the conquest of self. And no one knew of his heroism but He who "seeth not as man seeth."

It is generally supposed, and even written, that the passion of love is unconquerable by youth, and that it justifies strange irregularities of conduct; but the pale harper who sits by her he loves has vanquished the monster, and is all the stronger and all the grander for the victory. And even Daisy does not know how well he loved her, when he relinquished her for her own and another's sake. As she sits at his feet, gazing alternately at him and the waves, or straining to catch sight of the Earl's window, she considers him as a beloved brother, and believes that he never thought of her otherwise than as a sister. They make a charming picture: Michael at his harp, seated on a high piece of rock, Daisy on a lower boulder, Gwylfa watching the sea close by. They are out of reach of the tide, which is

coming slowly in, and rippling a chorus to Michael's music. The rocks on three sides, as well as the hills surmounting them, are clad in the subdued reds and browns of their autumnal garb, and the dark turrets of the Castle frown above them. Sound ascends; and they are so placed that it is just possible the plaintive tones of the harp may be wafted by the winds to the Earl's Tower.

"I hope, dear Daisy," began Michael, during a pause between two airs, "that you and Carad have not had a misunderstanding; you appear to me to keep too much apart."

"I am aware of none, Michael," replied Daisy, colouring. "But we see so little of him. Yesterday was a white day because he was at home. How happy we all were together!"

Michael's suspicions of Daisy's love for the hapless young lord had been aroused, as well as Caradoc's, and Daisy's furtive but incessant attempts to catch sight of the Earl's windows seemed rather to verify them.

"Play on, Michael; I think I see a figure, and the window wide open," she continued, glancing upward between two rocks. "Play louder—louder—I am sure it is the Earl!"

She rose in her excitement, and laid her hand on Michael's shoulder, looking through the aperture with her finger on her lips. Michael played on, and on.

It was the Earl. The music had reached the second storey of the gloomy retreat he had chosen, and he appeared suddenly at the window. There was also another listener and watcher Lady Mona stood on the summit of the rock where Michael and Daisy sat gazing up at her father's windows. She was outside the Castle wall, and sheltered from observation by some arbutus bushes. She knew the love of the stern man for the national music and national instrument, and had fancied that it anything could soften him they would. She was terrified at the figure those sounds she had invoked had drawn to the window. An emaciated face, with unkempt white hair and beard, looked out, while a thin hand grasped the bar that protected the casement. She uttered a little cry, and crept along underneath the

Castle wall, while she heard the distant music of the harp still floating upwards. She returned to the Castle, and hurried to her father's Tower. It must be now or never, she thought, roused into action, and softened by the Earl's appearance. The doors of the basement were locked, but she easily opened those of the second floor. One or two servants were engaged in the unoccupied rooms, who managed so as not to encounter their master. She passed them and went to the Earl's sitting-room, where she knocked softly at the door. Not receiving permission to enter, she turned the door-handle gently, and crept in. She had rarely been here before, and had, from childhood, conceived a terror of her father's Tower. She had associated it with ghosts and wrecks ever since she could remember. When she entered and saw his tall thin form, wrapped in a dressing-gown, and still at the window, she nearly lost courage, and thought of retreating. She scarcely believed it to be the Earl, for had not his hair been grey and short, and his beard shaven? —while here were long white locks and an unshorn beard. Lady Mona had always feared and avoided her father, but this was not her father, surely! She advanced timidly and unheard, while the echo of Michael's music stole in. It was literally echoed by the amphitheatre of rocks and hills, so that the notes were distinct. She reached the table, from which his lordship must have lately arisen, for his chair was just pushed back, and an open book lay before it. There was nothing else on the table. Lady Mona stood beside it, and glanced over the pages. To her surprise she saw that the book was a Bible. It was open at the fifty-second and fifty-third chapters of Isaiah. She did not know how appropriate they and the preceding chapters were to him who had been reading them. She did not guess that the Sacred Volume—Daisy's gift, and her dead brother's legacy—had been the food of her miserable father by day and by night for weeks. But, as she stood gazing upon it, tears rushed to her eyes, and, with a sort of involuntary yearning that she had never felt before, she held out her hands, and the word 'Father!" escaped from her lips. Hitherto it had been "My

lord." The Earl started, for no one but his son ever so addressed him. He turned his wan, wild face from the window, and saw a figure in black standing near the book he had been reading. No one had, as yet, dared to tell him that his daughter had arrived, and he had even forgotten the permission he had given Daisy in those words, "Let her come." Many weeks had passed since he had uttered them, during which he had been abstracted from all exterior things by his grief remorse, and the Book that lay upon the table. Lady Mona resembled her mother; and as she stood, pale and motionless, with her outstretched arms, the Earl must, for a moment, have believed that his dead wife had returned to him, for he ejaculated "Alicia," and staggered towards his daughter. Lady Mona, with a sudden impulse of tenderness new to her, hurried to meet him; and in a few moments father and daughter were clasped in one another's arms. The poor, bowed, white head was buried in shame, woe, penitence, remorse, on his child's shoulder; who, in her turn, felt similar emotions, if less terribly strong. While sobs broke from the one, floods of tears fell from the eyes of the other, and wetted the white head. The daughter only realized the strength of her father's grief, knowing little of his crimes; while he, in the strange confusion of mind bred by solitude and misery, realized nothing but that his wife had returned to comfort him. His mind would have given way had not Lady Mona come to him when she did; and, as it was, the brain was so disordered that he could not separate the imaginary from the real.

"Our boy is dead—drowned! I killed him!" he muttered at last.

"It is I, father: Mona!" whispered his daughter, still holding him embraced. "Forgive my offence, and let me comfort you. Oh! I am sorry for the past, and that I never saw either of them again. My grief and self-reproach are deeper than yours!"

These simple words roused the Earl. He drew himself up, and recognised his daughter. Then he sank down in the

chair, and covered his face with his hands. She, usually undemonstrative, and never having shown him affection before, knelt beside him, and, sobbing as if her heart would break, put her arms round him, and said,—

"Oh! father, this is terrible! Think of me, too—love me a little, oh, my father!"

It was now her turn to bury her head on her father's knees, and there, in the gathering October darkness and silence—for the echoes of music had ceased,—remember that, if he had never lavished much paternal love on her, she had never shown him either filial affection or duty. Still there were the germs of tenderness buried deep in those stern, cold, selfish natures, and perhaps they were to spring forth and blossom at last. Perhaps the Words of that Book of Life had sunk down even to those hidden seeds of natural feeling, and stirred them to a latent effort to put forth silent and secret shoots. Who shall say? But, oh! let parents and children take to heart that "Love is the fulfilling of the law!"

This father and child remained long speechless. At last the Earl broke forth, almost in the words of the Book he had studied morning, noon, and night, throughout the period of his solitude.

"Oh! miserable man that I am! who shall deliver me from the burden of this death?"

Then he laid one hand on the head of his trembling daughter, the other on the Bible, and cried, in the agony of his soul,—

"Oh! can I ever dare to say, 'Through Jesus Christ our Lord'?"

Lady Mona understood no more of this outbreak than she did of the remorse that caused it. She was terrified by it, and feared that her father had gone mad. Still, in her awakened tenderness, she sought for some word of consolation; and, while many thoughts darted through her mind, she remembered Daisy's parting advice—"Pray, and the Lord will be your guide."

"Help us, O God!" she cried aloud, in her distress, kneeling as she was at her father's feet, his hand on her head.

"Can I dare to pray?" he whispered, clutching at her hair in the extremity of his suffering.

"Yes, father," she replied, suppressing a scream at the pain he momentarily gave her.

He fell on his knees before the table, and laid his head on his arms over the Word of God. She turned and knelt beside him, leaning her hands and face on his shoulder. Thus, with no sound but sobs and tears, the Lord of Craigavon and his daughter prayed silently together for the first time to "the King of kings and Lord of lords"!

CHAPTER XLVII.

CANCELLING A DEBT.

WHEN Sir George Walpole next visited the Castle, he was told that Lady Mona spent most of her time with the Earl, and that she had given orders to be denied to all visitors.

This intelligence caused Sir George to announce at the farm that it was high time he should leave the neighbourhood, since he found that he could be of use to no one. He had by this time made his way into the hearts of his new friends, and recovered the friendship of the old. The Master and he spent much time together, discussing all subjects but one. Each carefully avoided the mention of Sir George's wife; and when Adam Perceval, as we must now call him, told the Pennants, casually, that Sir George was a widower, and not, as they supposed, a bachelor, he showed so plainly that further inquiries were distasteful to him that they abstained from making them.

"If you will come with me to London, Adam Perceval," said Sir George, after another fruitless visit to the Castle, "we will look up the publishers. I am told that there is nothing like a personal interview in such matters. If you will not let me benefit you by my useless money, you will, perhaps, let it benefit the world by the deep things contained in your book. Only don't expect me to read it. I like the world as it is, better than as it was. But every man to his taste."

"My book concerns the present as well as the past, sir," replied the Master, offended, "and you are not required to read it. However, I accept your offer; but remember, I am so poor and shabby that you will be ashamed of me."

"My tailor and hatter will furbish you up, if you will let them," laughed Sir George, "and there are a few old friends left who will not judge you by the cut of your coat. I should like to see the Earl and Lady Mona before I go; but I shall wear out welcome at the farm if I delay longer."

"No fear of that," remarked the Master. "As to the Earl, he will be himself again by the time you return. A miser's grief is golden."

"Why should I return, Adam Perceval? I have no claim to any one here. The old folks don't understand my language, and the young ones can't care for an old fellow like me. I wish I could take Daisy away with me. I never loved a girl so well before, and I confess I have tried to love many."

"Now don't make a fool of yourself in your old age, George. She won't have you. She must end by marrying either Carad or Michael; but, for the life of me, I can't find out which she likes best."

"Marry her own brother!" cried Sir George, amazed.

"What! have you been a month at Brynhafod without finding out that Daisy is not really a daughter of the house? But I don't wonder, for every one forgets it, and no one more entirely than herself. She is not a Pennant."

"Then who on earth is she? A relative?"

"No; only a foster-daughter. But every one looks on her as really one of the family, and this makes her relations with the boys so puzzling. They have been brought up as brothers and sisters, and now we all want Michael to marry her; but they seem no nearer matrimony than when they were children. She is sharp enough, I can tell you, and understands Latin and mathematics better than Michael."

"She owes this to you, Adam Perceval?"

"Rather to her own cleverness. She would learn everything I taught the boys."

"And yet she is so simple and innocent."

"She has had a pure and healthful life, and I took care that she had a pure and healthy literature. She has neither learnt

nor read anything that could bring a blush to her cheek. Here she comes to summon us to dinner. It will be as well not to remind her of her early history."

During this conversation the old friends had been pacing up and down in front of the farm, and it was interrupted by Daisy, as aforesaid. Sir George looked at her with, if possible, a new interest, and sighed as he accompanied her and the Master to the house. During the homely meal he found himself watching her and Michael, and speculating on their feelings for one another. He had requested that no alteration should be made in the farm hours and food on his account, and had declared that he had never in his life enjoyed a better appetite or sounder sleep.

"We shall miss the poultry, and the fresh eggs, and the vegetables, and the cream, and the well-cured bacon, when we get to town, Adam Perceval," he said.

"You are not really going to leave us, sir!" exclaimed Daisy, and translated his words into Welsh.

"Yes, my dear. And I am going to carry off the Master," was the reply.

"They will both come back again, my Eye of Day," said the old farmer, between whom and Michael she sat, as usual.

"Grandfather says you will come back, sir," she repeated.

"I will, God willing. I have almost found my lost happiness since I have been here," he rejoined. "And I have found what is next best—good listeners. You have helped me to fight all my battles over again."

As soon as David and his wife understood that Sir George was really going, they united with the rest in hoping that he would return.

"Tell him that there will always be a welcome and a bed for him," they said, simultaneously. "And we may be more settled, and the best bed-room furnished again," continued Mrs. Pennant.

"Have I not had the best bedroom? There could not be a better," asked Sir George.

"You have had Carad's room, sir, and he sleeps in town," replied Daisy, with a blush.

"You make a deal more fuss about him than me," put in the Master, feigning to be offended. "But when I come back as a celebrated author, perhaps you may think brain work as good as sword work."

This was said in Welsh, and elicited a general exclamation and subsequent explanation.

"Then our Master will be in print and famous, after all!" cried Daisy, enthusiastically.

"Thanks to the lacs of rupees. Don't forget that a lac is one hundred thousand, and each rupee two-and-fourpence in value," said the Master, casting a twinkling glance at her above his spectacles.

It was arranged that the journey to London should take place in a day or so; and Sir George, with the liberality of a generous nature, as well as of a man who had more money than he knew what to do with, was continually turning in his mind how he could repay his entertainers. He meditated bringing or sending fabulous presents from London, but, meanwhile, it was not his way to leave in debt. Accordingly, after family worship that same evening, he put a letter into Daisy's hand, and asked her to deliver it, for him, to her father. It was strange how that word "father" affected him, knowing, as he then did, that David Pennant was not her father after all. He retired immediately to his room, and Daisy gave the letter to David Pennant, who took it with a sort of tremor.

It may be stated here that, owing to the panic caused by the Earl's refusal to renew the lease, and Mr. Pennant's subsequent depression, every new thing gave him a shock. He had neglected his business, and Michael had been prevented, by his illness, seeing to it in his place. The old farmer was nearly past work, and thus money matters had got sadly into arrears. David Pennant had so lost heart that even the temporary breathing-space given by the late sad events had

not served to restore his natural spirits. It is one thing to be resigned, another to be cheerful. He knew that some heavy bills were due, and he did not know, just then, where to get the money; so when Daisy placed Sir George's letter in his hand, he trembled lest it should be a demand that he could not at once answer, prompt payment having ever been one of his many watchwords. He put it quietly into his pocket without asking any question, and waited until he was alone to open it. He read and spoke English so imperfectly that, beyond the beginning and the ending, he could make nothing of the missive. He accordingly recalled Daisy, whose privilege it was always to give him the last kiss, and who had left him last. He begged her to translate the letter for him, being assured that no demand for money could come to him from Sir George.

It was as follows :—

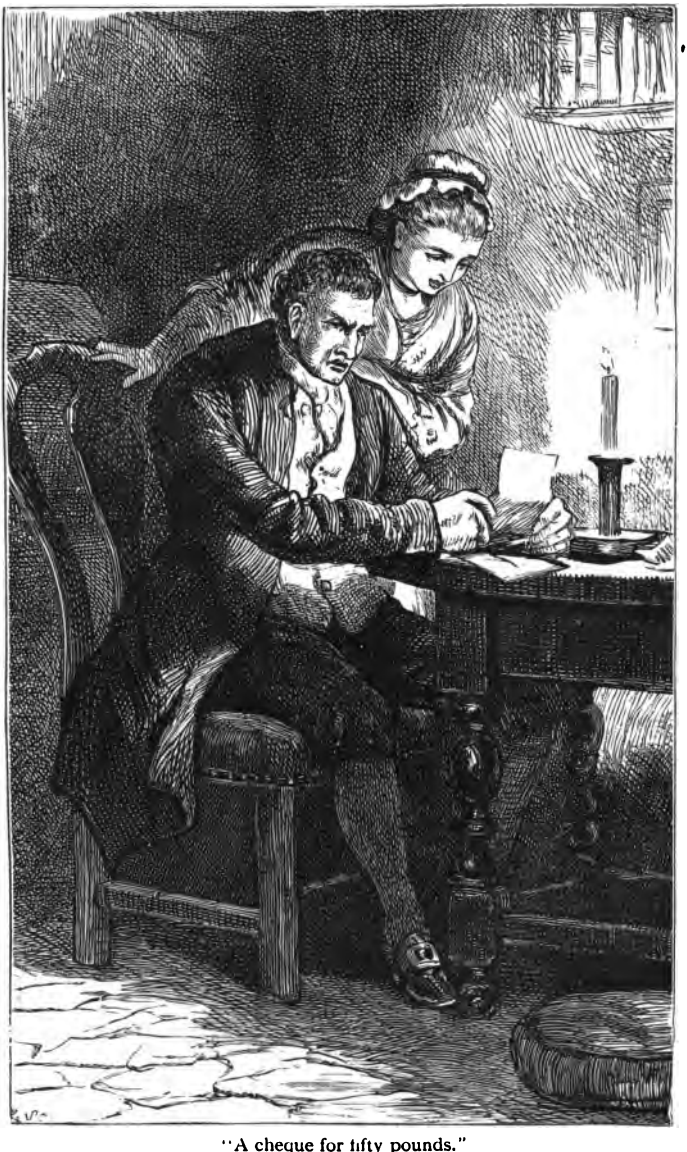
"My dear Sir,—I have to thank you and your good family for much undeserved kindness and hospitality. Will you do me the favour to appropriate the accompanying trifle in return, and believe me to be,

"Your sincere and obliged friend,

"George Walpole."

The "trifle" was a cheque for fifty pounds, written on one half of the sheet of paper, and payable at the bank in the town of Penruddock. Of course, all David's family were aware of his difficulties, though they had not ventured to speak to him concerning them; so Daisy, when she had read these few words, glanced at him half gladly, half doubtfully. She knew, by the sudden knitting of his brow, how he took the gift.

"A Saxon never understands a Celt!" he said. "I thought better of Sir George. Does he think I would take money for an act of hospitality? The Master should have told him better. Take back his cheque, Daisy, with my best acknowledgments, and say that as long as I have a house it is open to the stranger; but not for gold—not for gold."



"A cheque for fifty pounds."

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Daisy took the cheque, which he separated from the letter, and throwing her arms round his neck, said, "You are right, dear father. I would rather think of him as our guest."

She felt shy and nervous, however, when she did David Pennant's bidding the following morning. She asked Sir George to come with her into the parlour, and there placed the cheque in his hands, repeating her foster-father's words as accurately as she could. Sir George looked hurt.

"I should not have invited myself had I not taken it for granted that he would allow me to make some return," he said. "I meant no offence, but only wished to repay, in a slight degree, his kindness in receiving me. I should have gone to an hotel had I supposed he meant to give all, and take nothing. Of course I can never intrude again."

"Oh! sir, do not say that," exclaimed Daisy. "You have cheered us all, and done grandfather and father so much good. They were very low when you came, and now they are almost as merry as usual. Besides, you are the Master's friend."

"But the Master has been living upon them for nothing all these years. What is the use of money if one cannot repay the good deeds of worthy people?" asked Sir George, irritably.

"Repay, sir! Kindness is its own repayment," replied Daisy, thoughtfully. "Father and mother expect no return, or what should I do, who have been only a trouble to them all my life?"

"I only wish I had such a trouble," said Sir George, gazing on the sweet sensitive face, and remembering the Master's caution not to remind her of her early history. "But I have no claim upon them; I am rich, and they won't share my riches. Even Carad has disappointed me by declining a capital military appointment that I could get him for the asking."

"It would kill mother if Carad went away," said Daisy, her face flushing.

"And Daisy, too, would be grieving, I fancy," returned Sir

George, noting the changing colour. "Will you tell your father, from me, that I honour him for his independent spirit, but that I, also, have one, and am ashamed of myself for trespassing, uninvited, on my neighbour's homestead. I shall yet hope to find the means of returning his hospitality, if not here, elsewhere; though I can never emulate his benevolence."

"You would be doing him a kindness, sir, if, when you see the Earl, you could counsel his lordship to renew our lease," suggested Daisy. "I think father dislikes living on in this uncertainty."

"I will write to him," replied Sir George. "I have many things to say, and I may introduce the subject incidentally. I will enclose my letter open to Lady Mona, who can give it or not as she sees fit."

Sir George went to his room at once to write his letter, in which he expressed a desire to see his old friend before he left the country, and to ascertain from him, personally, whether Brynhafod was to be let. He knew the Earl too well to appeal against his decision, and hazarded this question merely as a matter of business.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

A FRATERNAL EXPLANATION.

BEFORE the day was out, a messenger arrived at Bryn-hafod bearing a note from Lady Mona to Sir George Walpole. It contained an invitation to that gentleman to spend a day or two at the Castle before he left the country, and urged his kindly accepting it at once. Sir George did not hesitate, but returned an answer to the effect that he would be with Lady Mona to dinner. He made arrangements with Adam Perceval to meet him at Penruddock in a few days, for their projected journey to London, and took rather a hasty leave of his friends at the farm. Marget's eyes opened wide when he dropped a golden guinea into her hand, and Daisy's had tears in them when he pressed a paper into hers, with the words, "Distribute it among the poor, my dear. They won't refuse it. I daresay we shall meet again."

When she opened the paper, she found the cheque of which she had previously been bearer.

"What can I do with it?" she exclaimed, as she stood with the rest of the family at the door, looking after the retreating figure of Sir George, and of the Master, who was "sending him," as the Welsh have it.

"Make the hearts of our neighbours leap for joy: I will soon get it cashed," replied David Pennant. "He deserves to be a hero, and he shall pay us next time, if he will."

"This is really 'speeding the parting guest,'" remarked Sir George to Ap Adam, as he looked back to see master, mistress, men, and maids watching him.

"There's generous he is!" said little Ben, when he returned from shouldering Sir George's portmanteau to the Castle.

Every one with whom Sir George came in contact endorsed little Ben's opinion; but Daisy was the only one who shed tears when he departed from Brynhafod, and she found it difficult to return to the routine of daily life after the eventful stir of the late weeks and his presence at the farm.

The next day brought Mr. Tudor, with a message from Sir George to Adam Perceval, to the effect that they must delay their journey to London for a week or so.

"The Earl refuses to see me," said Mr. Tudor. "Lady Mona says that he cannot yet bear to meet any one who had to do with Lord Penruddock; and that she fears he will make that an excuse for declining an interview with Sir George. But it is something gained that he is admitted at all to the Castle."

"I consider myself only a tenant at will or on sufferance," said David Pennant, "and shall be ready to quit when you think best. I am not sure that it was wise to act on those few words of the Earl to Carad; for he has never sent for him since, or alluded to the subject."

"His lordship has not either spoken or written on any matter of business, so we can only wait," rejoined the Vicar.

"You and Miss Manent set us a good example in that line," laughed David, with something of his old manner.

"Waiting" seemed the normal condition of all Lord Craigavon's friends and dependants at that period. Those in the Castle waited for money to keep its routine going, and the outsiders for orders; but all were agreed in respecting a grief so overwhelming as even to make one, whose passion was reputed avarice, forgetful of his money and his rights.

Caradoc was, individually, the most independent of circumstances connected with the Earl. Patients thronged to his town rather than to his country abode, and, as money came in, he quietly went on furnishing his house, with a view to receiving his family there in case of emergency. As we have

said, he was little at Brynhafod, and the estrangement increased between him and Daisy, neither knew why.

Saturday was market-day at Penruddock, and Michael came to see him. As this was his busiest day, he prevailed with his brother to spend the Sunday with him.

"We can then have a quiet talk over everything," he said. "We are never alone together now."

"I can send word home by Ben *bach*, and return Monday morning," replied Michael, and the brothers rejoiced in a genuine and lengthy conversation.

After they had been to the quaint old church in the quaint old town, and had had their bachelor tea, Michael took the opportunity of beginning the subject nearest to his heart. He prefaced it by remarking that all the young ladies had their eye on Carad and his smart new house, and that, if he didn't take care, some one or other of them would storm and carry the fortifications. Of course Caradoc replied, as young men do, that the attempt would be useless, for he did not mean to marry.

"I see no one so pretty as our Daisy," said Michael. "There may be girls more accomplished and smarter dressed, but not so fair. Neither can they ride so well, and I'll be bound they do not understand Latin."

Caradoc smiled, and stroked a kitten that had been brought from Brynhafod, and had attached itself to him. It was, at the moment, crawling up to his shoulder. Seeing that he made no reply, however, Michael continued:

"Have Daisy and you quarrelled, Carad? You seem to avoid her; and, indeed, I think it makes her unhappy."

"No, we have not quarrelled, Michael," answered Caradoc.

"If you were to bring Daisy here as bride, Carad, she would surpass, in beauty and manners, every fine lady in Penruddock," hazarded Michael.

Caradoc glanced up quickly at Michael, who sat opposite him by the cheerful fire.

"What do you mean, brother? If Daisy's heart is not with

the dead it should be at Brynhafod, and continue to beat there till the end," he said, hastily.

"Not so, Carad," returned Michael, gravely. "I cannot yet discover if she loved the unfortunate lord, for I am not brave enough to ask her; but assuredly her heart is not with me, as you imply. She loves me as a sister, and loves me well, but no more."

Michael suppressed all the emotion he felt, and met Caradoc's flashing eyes calmly.

"My poor Michael—my dearest brother! Has she told you this? Did it cause your illness? Have you lived through so cruel a case?" asked Caradoc, excitedly.

"Nothing of the kind, Carad; but I have told her, and she did not deny it. Knowing the wishes and intentions of our parents, and that she would obey them, I took myself and her to task. I discovered that, if I married, I must win something more than a sister's love, and feel—well—feel more than a brother's. During my illness I watched her narrowly. She gave me all the care and all the nursing, but not the love. She was sometimes almost hard and absent, and rarely tender. She was, indeed, not herself. It was at this time that Lord Penruddock's proposal and the Earl's vengeance were hanging over us, and I know not if that caused her strangeness; but I discovered assuredly that she did not love me."

Michael paused; for Caradoc had, in his excitement, thrown down the kitten, and drawn his chair close to his brother's.

"Oh! Michael, how could you bear it?" he exclaimed.

"As you see, and have seen," replied Michael, smiling, and maintaining his composure. "You remember seeking us on the little mountain that hay-making time, after my illness? I had just told her that I knew she did not love me otherwise than as a sister, and that I pined for the old sisterly affection that she had withdrawn. Had you seen her change of face, Carad—and I understand its every expression—you would have known I was right. You remember how we all walked home together in silence, and how meekly and tenderly she

watched and waited on me. We have been as brother and sister ever since, and my only fear is that our parents still look forward to our being something nearer. They have set their hearts on her for a real daughter, Carad."

Michael paused, and Caradoc took up the conversation with difficulty.

"They reckon on your marriage with her," he said. "Father told me not long since that he was glad to see that you and Daisy were on the old terms once more. And, Michael, I believe you have always loved her."

"Dearly, Carad, and love her still, as my sister; but I shall never marry her. And if I did, she might soon be widowed, for you know how uncertain are my health and life. But I also wish she were in truth my sister. We should then be even happier, and more at ease together, than now. If you have shunned her for my sake, brother, as I think you have, pray do so no more. And oh! give me back the old confidence; for our souls were one as boys, but they have been divided as men. I know you kept from me the secret of your beacon for my good, and maybe you have concealed that of your love."

Michael fixed his eyes on his brother's troubled face, and felt sure that he was right. Caradoc looked eager and excited, but pained. It was some time before he spoke.

"Michael," he said at last, "it would be hard if we both loved Daisy, and both loved in vain—hard if, after this our struggle to sacrifice our love for her to one another, she should be devoted to the memory of the dead. It was she who gave the Bible to Lord Penruddock, and she alone who had influence with the Earl. On her way home from the Castle with me, after her last interview with him, she never spoke, but I think shed tears silently."

"Perhaps you did not speak to her," suggested Michael.

"No, for I did not care to intrude upon her grief."

"Time will clear up the mystery," said Michael, perplexed. "But, meanwhile, will you be as brother to her once more?"

"I cannot, Michael, for my love is not a brother's. It must be all or nothing. But for our mother, I should be away over sea, beyond her influence. My life is just now an almost unendurable struggle, for I am not half so brave or good as you. Brother, show me how you have gained a victory that I can never hope to win."

Caradoc put his arm round Michael's neck in the old boyish way, and looked into his pure, thoughtful eyes.

"Now we are brothers again!" cried Michael, joyfully. "Not even Daisy can estrange us, for our hearts are one. Seek her love, Carad, for it is worth the winning. Even if she so far forgot us and our station as to think of Lord Penruddock, it was only for a time."

"I heard her say that she would not give him up," interrupted Caradoc.

"God's will was stronger than hers, and he is gone," replied Michael. "She will yet give her love to you, who were her first and best. Strive for it, for all our sakes."

"You would not say so had you seen her emotion when we found him on the beach. She nearly fainted," argued Caradoc.

"I have seen her turn white as a sheet at sight of a dead lamb," returned Michael. "She has a woman's tender heart."

"Michael, I dare not talk of Daisy!" exclaimed Caradoc, abruptly. "I have patients to see. I will be back soon."

And, so saying, he left Michael to his hopes and fears.

CHAPTER XLIX.

A LONELY JOURNEY.

TOWARDS the end of dreary November, a chaise and pair, with the customary post-boy, drove quickly through the hamlet of Craigavon, and vanished down the road to the Castle. The peasants speculated; but as the shutters of the chaise were closed, and no one was visible within, they could not discover what was to be its use. It passed through the great gates, and drew up at the principal entrance of the Castle. Almost immediately after, a servant brought out some luggage, and placed it noiselessly on the chaise, motioning to the post-boy to keep his horses quiet. There was a strange stillness within and about the Castle, and no one was visible except the aforesaid domestic, who disappeared as soon as he had completed his task. He was succeeded by Lady Mona, who entered the great hall, glancing from side to side; then went into the court, still looking cautiously about her. She retreated in turn, satisfied, apparently, that there were no spectators. In a few minutes she reappeared, accompanied by the Earl, who was leaning on her arm.

His lordship tottered as he walked, and held his head down even more than was his custom. He appeared so much broken that such servants as contrived to get sight of him from their various hiding-places, declared they would not have known him. He neither spoke during his passage through the Castle, nor after he had entered the chaise; but, pressing his daughter's hand, allowed her to close the shuttered door upon him. When this was done, his valet suddenly came from behind a

projecting part of the Castle, and mounted the box. The chaise drove off; and thus the Lord of Craigavon quitted his Castle so silently and secretly that, but for the unexpected appearance of the conveyance, his dependants would scarcely have been aware of his departure.

Lady Mona stood alone under the arched doorway to watch the carriage, then silently stole through the gloomy halls and passages until she reached her own apartments. Here she sat long in lonely meditation. Although she had been much with her father since their interview of seeming reconciliation, he had spoken little to her. When she had asked permission to be his companion, he had assented with the proviso that no one else should approach him. Knowing his taciturn nature, she was not surprised at his silence; but she could not understand his state. He had continued to read the Bible, but had alternated his reading by writing letters. These had been principally to Sir George Walpole, and to his lawyers in town and country. All that Lady Mona knew concerning them was that, on the receipt of the last, Sir George had expressed his intention of going at once to town, and thence to Scotland, to a shooting-box of the Earl's in that country, which had been a favourite resort of Lord Penruddock.

Sir George had left the Castle accordingly, without being admitted to the Earl's presence; and, when he was gone, Lady Mona heard from her father that he intended to follow him to Scotland, and she was requested to remain at the Castle until the General's return, after which she was to leave at once for London. She had nothing to do but to obey.

As she sat alone in the window where her mother used to sit at her embroidery, she felt strangely uncertain concerning the future. The Castle and its dependencies must be hers eventually, but why had her father left it? and why was she to quit it? She knew that he had lost his chief interest in life with his son; still he had been almost as much engrossed in his wealth as in him. The more she thought the more confused she became, and at last she grew so depressed that she

summoned Morris, just then her only resource for conversation. Morris could always find a reason for everything, and said it was her belief that his lordship was only gone away for a time to be quiet; and that he would come back by-and-by, as well as ever, and make as much of Lady Mona as he had done of Lord Penruddock.

"But for that Daisy Pennant I don't believe his lordship would have been drowned at all," said Morris, decidedly. "He came back unforeseen to see her; and that's my opinion, my lady, if I should die for it."

"It is all so sudden and strange that I cannot understand it," replied Lady Mona; "but Daisy has, in some way, been the means of reconciling me to the Earl, and it is my intention to repay her. You remember her locket? It must be returned to her. I am sorry, now, that I ever asked you to unfasten it; but it was only childish curiosity and jealousy, and I did not mean to steal it."

"Dear me! no, my lady. The child lost it, and I picked it up afterwards," said Morris. "There was such a fuss about my Lord Penruddock and that Caradoc Pennant afterwards, and his lordship's going to school, and all sorts of nonsense, that I declare to goodness I forgot all about it till—you remember, my lady—till it was too late to send it back."

Lady Mona did remember, and a flush of shame overspread her face. She had even a dim recollection that she wanted the beautiful locket, and that to please her, Morris had manipulated it, until she had discovered the secret of the clasp, and finally stolen it. However, she neither dared to express nor believe this; she preferred thinking that Daisy had actually dropped the locket, that Morris had picked it up, and, after some weeks, had shown it to her. She knew full well that Morris had impressed upon her the fact that all waifs and strays were the Earl's, and that, consequently, the locket was his, and by inheritance hers; she also knew that the passion of avarice had been born with her, as with her father. But late events had awakened dormant conscience.

"I daresay you know where the locket is, Morris," said Lady Mona. "Bring it to me."

"Indeed, my lady, I'm not *sure*," replied Morris, feeling frightened. "Suppose they should suspect me, and your ladyship knows I only picked it up, and then, as was natural in a child, your ladyship wanted to keep it a little while, and so——"

"You shall not be implicated; but you must find the locket."

"I'm thinking that your ladyship carried it away when you left for London, and I'm not responsible for that period of your ladyship's *jewellery*."

Lady Mona was herself uncertain on this point, although she knew that she had not seen the locket since she left the Castle.

"We will search for it, then, Morris," she said. "At any rate we have the Castle to ourselves; and if we find it, Daisy and her friends will readily believe that it has turned up in some of the Earl's hiding-places. When I am mistress here, I shall be able to repay you for your devotion to me, and we shall not miss the locket, valuable as it undoubtedly is. I hope Sir George Walpole will return soon, for I should die if I were to remain here long alone; and the Earl requests that no one but he shall be admitted. I cannot have even Miss Manent, or Daisy, or Dr. Pennant; and I dared not name Captain Soames."

During the intercourse with her father, Lady Mona had not ventured to mention her husband; and the Earl had appeared to ignore him. As he had, however, apparently forgiven her, she had the discretion to be silent, almost wondering whether he might not have forgotten her secret marriage in his demented grief.

She passed the weeks that intervened before Sir George's return in packing up all that belonged to her at the Castle. Selfishness came back with solitude, and she, not unjustly, considered she had a right to possess what was her own.

When Sir George Walpole reappeared, she was ready to depart, but naturally made many inquiries concerning her father's plans for the future, and his intentions as regarded his establishment at the Castle. Sir George told her that the Earl had, in writing, bound him over to secrecy for the present, but that his intentions would soon be made public. It was evident that Sir George was perplexed by his position as manager of the Earl's affairs, and he assured Lady Mona that he would write her full particulars as soon as her father gave him permission, adding that he disliked secrets, and this one was scarcely necessary. He concluded a long conversation on business, by saying abruptly,—

"Do you like this place, Lady Mona?"

"I hate it, and shouldn't care if I never saw it again," was the reply. "If you see Miss Manent, will you wish her goodbye for me, and Daisy Pennant—I am fond of her. By-the-way, you will do me a favour, Sir George?"

"Anything in my power," replied that gentleman,

Lady Mona left the room abruptly, but soon returned.

"Will you kindly undertake to place this in the hands of Daisy Pennant yourself?" said her ladyship, giving Sir George a small, neatly-folded, well-sealed packet. "Tell her it was found the other day, and I remembered that she lost it here." She flushed as she spoke, though her words were measured.

"You may depend on me, Lady Mona," said Sir George, putting the parcel in his waistcoat pocket.

Lady Mona left Craigavon very differently from the Earl, and carried off much more luggage than she brought with her. Imperials and boxes were piled on the carriage, and no available space was unfilled. She told Sir George frankly that she was taking with her some of the possessions she had left behind her when she went to London, and that she would be obliged by his seeing that others, marked with her name, were preserved for her. Sir George said her wishes should be attended to, and that he was empowered to negotiate with her on such matters, and would gladly serve her.

All the servants stood about the court, some prepared to accompany her ladyship, others packing the carriage, a few idle. Morris was in travelling trim, having resumed her old position as maid. There had been no regrets when the Earl took his silent departure; there were none when Lady Mona made her more magnificent exodus. As she bowed graciously to one and another, and shook hands with Sir George, her manner was rather cold and haughty than depressed or anxious. Still, as the carriage and four drove off, she looked at the grand and gloomy pile she was leaving with a pride that such ancestral residences usually inspire, and uttered the words, "I hope the secret is of no moment, and that the Earl will soon return."

"I will write at once," replied Sir George, his manner much embarrassed.

As she passed under the great arched portcullis, and drove swiftly up the Castle road, the November winds and the sea waves made moan together, while the discoloured trees and browning hills looked sorrowfully down, as they had done when the Earl departed. At a gate leading to Brynhafod, she saw Daisy. She uttered an imperative "Stop," and beckoned her to the carriage.

"Good-bye, Daisy. Were you watching for me?" she said.

"Yes, my lady. Good-bye, and God bless you!" replied Daisy.

They shook hands warmly.

"Drive on," cried Lady Mona as she strained out of the carriage to see the last of Daisy, who stood watching at the gate.

CHAPTER L.

TWO FATHERS.

THE nine days' wonder at the Earl and Lady Mona's departure was succeeded by another. It was publicly announced in a few weeks that the Earl of Craigavon had sold his Welsh property, and that Sir George Walpole was its purchaser. Sir George was actually in possession before any one but himself, the Earl, and the lawyers, was made acquainted with the fact, and he alone knew anything of the circumstances that led to it.

In reply to his letter of inquiry concerning the lease of Brynhafod, the Earl had written to say that he intended to sell the Castle and its dependencies, and to quit Wales for ever. It was instantly apparent to Sir George that his lordship could no longer endure a place where his only son had been drowned, and knowing the man, he was convinced that he would not change his purpose. He was himself quick, nay, hasty, of resolve, and a few hours' consideration sufficed to induce him to inquire concerning the purchase of the estates. He liked what he had seen of Wales and her people, and he believed that he might secure that peace at Craigavon that he had lost in India. He also thought that he might spend his large fortune usefully among a poor peasantry, and inaugurate a better system of things for the seafarers.

The Earl's morbid dread of publicity caused him to fall in with Sir George's views at once, and a brisk correspondence ensued. Sir George was empowered to treat with the Earl's lawyers both in town and country; but was to name the sub-

ject to no one else, until the transfer of the property was completed, and the Earl and his daughter had left the Castle.

When Sir George, accompanied by Adam Perceval, went to London, the former was engaged in law, the latter in literature; and while the one completed his arrangements for the purchase of a large estate, the other made his for the publication of a great work. Sir George also went to Scotland, at the Earl's request, to prepare his people there for his reception; and he met Captain Everard Soames in London, to inform him that his father-in-law wished him to take possession of his town-house for the present, in order to receive Lady Mona there.

The Earl's secretive nature manifested itself even in his despair; for nothing was evolved during these transactions that could throw further light on his plans. When Sir George returned to the Castle, he did not know that his lordship had already left it, or that he had ordered Lady Mona's departure immediately afterwards.

Thus, when both were actually gone, Sir George found himself in possession of an extensive, if not a rich, estate, and suddenly invested with responsibilities graver than he had imagined.

He felt restless, nevertheless, until he took them on himself, and scarcely allowed the astonishing news to circulate, before he began to reflect on what he had to do.

His mind naturally turned to Brynhafod, and he resolved that his first act and deed should be to set the Pennants at ease concerning the lease.

They had heard with astonishment and pleasure, though not unmixed with regrets for the melancholy Earl, of the change of landlords. Daisy, especially, was much delighted and much troubled. While rejoicing that Sir George was to be chief, she could not help sorrowing for the deposed lord. She loved the one, and pitied the other. While dispensing Sir George's bounties, she had seen the shuttered chaise drive past, and her tender heart sank when she afterwards heard that it contained

one who would be henceforth as dead to her. She also speculated whether Sir George Walpole, as lord of the manor, would be as kind and condescending as he had been when the honoured guest of the farm.

One evening, early in December, the Pennants were seated round the chimney-corner, talking over these strange changes. Caradoc and Adam Perceval were both there, and the family party was complete. Daisy had just been saying that she wished Sir George would come and see them, when that gentleman appeared in their midst. He had entered gently, as he had been in the habit of doing when he stayed with them, and his hand was on his favourite Daisy's shoulder, almost before she knew he was in the room. The bustle was great, and the greetings warm. When he had shaken hands with all the party, he sat down by Daisy, opposite the log fire, in a place vacated by Caradoc, who took his old seat near his mother. It was natural that the new relations of landlord and tenant should produce a momentary shyness, but Sir George soon dispelled it.

"I could not rest," he said, "until I came to ask you to remain here, Mr. Pennant. I scarcely understand either myself, or my position, as yet; but I hope the change made by Lord Craigavon will not induce you to change."

Sir George addressed old Mr. Pennant, but, as he seemed unable to answer, his son replied for him, Caradoc acting as interpreter.

"We shall be thankful to continue your tenants, Sir George, as you must know, and we will strive to do our best for you and the land."

"Then that is settled," said Sir George. "We will get a lease for nine hundred and ninety-nine years, by which time you, or your successors, may have come to your own again."

An expressive silence succeeded these words, during which Mrs. Pennant's smooth face was wet with tears, and Daisy's fair head bent to conceal her emotion. Then the old man spoke.

"I thank the Lord, and you, sir, that I shall be permitted to end my days where I began them; and I pray that my children may never disgrace their name or your property."

A murmur of thanks and assent circled through the little party, and grateful feeling shone in the eyes which the flames lighted up. Sir George broke another temporary silence.

"Lady Mona has given me a little commission for you, Daisy. She requested me to deliver this to you myself."

He took from his waistcoat pocket the packet Lady Mona had entrusted to his care, and placed it in Daisy's hand.

"I was to tell you," he continued, "that you lost it at the Castle, and it was found the other day."

"Open it, Daisy," said several voices at once, as all leant forwards in eager expectancy and excitement.

She broke the seals, and opening a small paper box, saw the long-lost locket and chain, which she had forgotten. She held it up in the firelight, saying,

"Has Lady Mona sent me so handsome a present?"

"It is your own locket, Daisy!" exclaimed Mrs. Pennant, roused into animation, and rising from her seat.

"That it certainly is, for I remember it," said Caradoc, rising also.

There was quite a hubbub and general movement round Daisy, as she sat looking at the costly ornament, and holding it before her.

"How strange that it should be found after so many years, and how beautiful it is!" said Daisy. "My name is quite clear in the brilliants. Who can I be?"

"Will you let me look at it?" asked Sir George Walpole, who had been listening and looking on.

Daisy placed the locket and chain in his hand. He examined them carefully in the firelight, stooping to do so.

"How did she come by this?" he asked, glancing at Caradoc.

"It was round her neck when she was saved from the wreck," he replied.

"When Carad and Gwylfa saved me, and brought me here," said Daisy, turning to Sir George.

The old dog, asleep on the hearth, hearing his name, got up and put his paw on Daisy's lap.

"Are you quite sure that it is the same locket?" asked Sir George, in a strange, husky voice, still examining it.

"It can be no other," replied Caradoc; "we all remember, except Daisy; it was never off her neck until the day I took her first to the Castle, with Lady Mona's maid, Morris; but we have never seen it since."

"I believe Miss Morris stole it," muttered Mrs. Pennant.

"How old was she?—how was she wrecked?—what was the ship?" asked Sir George, with singular agitation, still looking at the locket.

"We thought her about four or five," returned Caradoc. "The wreck was at Ton Bay, and every soul besides perished. We were all on the spot to try and save life, but nothing came on shore except Daisy, brought in by Gwylfa."

"And my doll, Carad," put in Daisy.

"And the black figure-head of the ship—my Cleopatra—which I rescued," said Adam Perceval,

"My God! can it be!" exclaimed Sir George, clasping his hands, and letting fall the chain and locket.

All eyes were turned upon him. He looked so pale that Daisy, seated next to him, was frightened. She laid her hand on his with the exclamation, "Oh! sir, what is the matter?"

He clasped the hand tightly, but could not answer. They were alarmed for him, and his friend Adam Perceval entreated him to speak, and tell them what it meant.

"One moment," said Sir George, recovering himself. "If what you say be true—if this chain was clasped round her neck—if——But tell me what she said when you saved her."

"She pointed to the hair in the locket as her papa and mamma's," cried Caradoc, suspecting, he knew scarcely what, from Sir George's agitation. "She said her father was far away over the sea, and her mother and her ayah were gone

on in the ship. She spoke much in a tongue which the Master said was Hindostanee. She talked of soldiers, and seemed accustomed to strange scenes."

"She could read a little and repeat hymns, and was docile and well-trained from the first," interrupted the Master.

Sir George continued to hold Daisy's hand as in a vice, while he bent over it and listened; and Daisy glanced from one to another in astonishment. At last Sir George Walpole turned to Daisy, and said, as calmly as he could, as though not to take her by surprise—

"Daisy, my darling, God has brought it to pass. Nothing is too wonderful for Him. I am your father!"

Then he took her in his arms and kissed her.

Daisy trembled as he held her, understanding nothing, while a strong emotion thrilled through her.

"Say it again! What does it mean?" she whispered.

"That your mother and I hung that locket round your neck; that she was ill, and took you with her to England; that I never saw or heard of her, or you, or the ayah again; but that you are miraculously restored to me, and are my long-lost child."

"Your child!" cried Adam Perceval and the others simultaneously.

"My child—my own!" said Sir George, with a sob.

"You never told me——" began Adam Perceval excitedly.

"You never asked, and I dared not speak of my double loss. They were gone, and my grief was buried, I thought, with them. But that was my little one's locket, and this is—my Daisy!"

Yes; Daisy Pennant was Daisy Walpole. In the mysterious ways of Providence, Sir George had brought his own daughter the only remaining memorial of her early life, and the only thing left to her that could have enabled him to recognise her. A few minutes had sufficed to draw back the veil of years, and to prove to him that the young girl who had strangely attracted him from the first was his daughter.

"Thy ways are past finding out!" ejaculated Old Farmer Pennant, when he understood what had passed before him, and saw Sir George and Daisy's strong emotion.

Mrs. Pennant picked up the locket, and went softly behind Daisy to clasp it round her neck.

"You are our child all the same," she whispered, as she pressed her motherly lips on her foster-daughter's cheek, and began to cry quietly.

Daisy leaned her head against her, and burst into tears. She could not realize what had happened, or that she was other than she had seemed to be so many years.

By degrees, however, as she and Sir George grew calm, they disentangled the strange web of events, and knew that they were in very deed father and daughter. Every one present had something to say of the shipwreck and subsequent communications of the rescued child, and Marget was called, before the evening ended, to add her knowledge to that of the rest, and to wonder at the grand discovery. Sir George received every possible detail, from the moment when Gwylfa laid Daisy at Caradoc's feet, until the time when he first saw her at the early Christmas service; and as the old dog, on hearing his name often repeated, went from one to another, the grateful father laid his hand on his great shaggy head and blessed him. His gratitude to Caradoc and the others was too deep for words, but he blessed them also in his heart.

In return for the minute history told to him, he gave a slight sketch of his brief married life. Glancing at Adam Perceval, he said that he had been united somewhat hastily to Daisy's mother, the day before they were to set sail for India. She had been delicate then, and the climate of her new home did not agree with her. She was better, however, after Daisy's birth, for a year or so, when her health again failed. It was at last decided that she should return to England, and take the child with her. This was a terrible grief to Sir George, who knew that many years must elapse before he could see them again.

Shortly before they left him he bought the locket and chain which had been instrumental in the late recognition, caused the word "Daisy" to be engraven amongst the diamonds—the child's name being Marguerite—and had his own and his wife's hair placed within. The trick of the clasp was known only to his wife and Daisy's black nurse, who accompanied them on their ill-fated voyage.

The *Cleopatra* set sail when Sir George was engaged in active service; and about the time that he should have received letters from his wife, he learnt that the vessel was reported lost, for she had not been heard of since she touched at the Cape. The rest we already know.

Daisy was much overcome by this brief sketch of her mother's sad story, told by Sir George in haste and broken sentences. She could not realize her position, and while claimed and embraced by Sir George as his daughter, she held out her disengaged hand to David Pennant; and looking from one to another between tears and smiles, she said, "I am indeed fortunate, for I have now two fathers."

CHAPTER LI.

FROM FARM TO CASTLE.

WE have seen that Sir George Walpole had a quick, decided mind. Having found a daughter, therefore, his first idea was that she should come to him at once, and be recognised as Miss Walpole, of Craigavon Castle. Daisy and the Pennants, while shrinking from the prospect of separation, still felt that his claim was just, and prepared to yield to it. But an unexpected delay occurred, which caused her to continue a while longer at Brynhafod, to the general joy.

The day but one after the discovery of her parentage, and while she and her father were together, discussing his hopes and plans for their happy future life, a letter reached him from the Earl. It contained a briefly-expressed request that Sir George would do his lordship the favour of causing to be sold by auction the contents of the Castle vaults and Aran Tower, together with such furniture of the Castle as he did not desire to retain.

"This is what I wished," said Sir George, putting the letter into Daisy's hand. "Now I can have a cheerful home for my darling. But she must remain a little longer in the old one."

It seemed almost like a reprieve to Daisy, who dreaded the Castle, and could not realize her new position.

"You will not disturb the Countess's boudoir, dear sir?" she said, a tear trembling in her eye, as she held the letter of one with whom she had had encounters so terrible and so pathetic.

"You shall retain what you will—furnish anew as you will, my darling—my daughter!" replied Sir George.

"I have no choice, dear sir; but perhaps Lady Mona——" Daisy paused.

"I understand, my Daisy. She shall be consulted, and we will keep for her—or, more properly, buy in for her and ourselves—what we wish to possess. We must not defraud the Earl of 'his rights,'" said Sir George, with a smile.

"The poor, sad Earl!" echoed Daisy, shuddering.

Sir George put his arm round her and kissed her, saying gaily that grandfather and all the rest must be consulted concerning the sale.

"May I call them here?" she asked, her face brightening at the term "grandfather."

"We will seek them together, if you will take me with you. I cannot lose sight of my new and only treasure," replied Sir George, who was in danger of repressing her natural freedom by over-much devotion.

But consultations concerning the sale, and consequent arrangements for it, came opportunely to divert the inmates of the farm and parish from the subject of Daisy and her father, and to restore her mind to its balance.

The prompt Sir George Walpole set to work at once to seek auctioneers and advertise the sale, which created great excitement throughout the county, and, indeed, far beyond it. Sir George was assisted by his friend Perceval in superintending the clearance of Tower and vaults, and sad, indeed, was the sight of the heap of sea-worn, rust-eaten, rat-ridden goods displayed to view. But all articles of value had been abstracted from the melancholy heaps of wreckage, and the shells alone remained of the rich fruits the sea had supplied for the Earl's harvests. Amongst these was an empty box, with the name "Wyndham" on its lid. It will be remembered that Gwylfa helped to tug it ashore, the morning after Daisy's advent at the farm. It brought another proof, if one were wanting, of Daisy's identity—since Sir George knew that a

Colonel and Mrs. Wyndham were among the passengers by the ill-fated *Cleopatra*. This box was reverently preserved.

People came to the sale from far and near, crowding both Castle and Tower, to gratify a long-entertained curiosity. The observatory on the Tower, and the Countess's boudoir, were the only parts not open to the public. This was a disappointment, and so was the absence of Daisy from the scene of so unusual a novelty. Every one wanted to see the future mistress of the Castle—the girl reputed so beautiful, yet only a farm-maiden—her so romantically saved, and recognised. But no Daisy appeared. She spent three of the most wretched days she ever remembered to have passed; for she resolutely remained within doors, longing to be without. Mere confinement to the house was not the sole trial she endured. She was condemned to hear Mrs. Pennant's continued, "Ah! Daisy, what shall we do without you?" and Marget's, "Ach! Miss Daisy, and that's not befitting a grand lady like you!" and to catch woe-begone glances from the rest of the household.

However, another nine days' wonder ended at last, and the sale was over, and Daisy free to wander about once more at her own sweet will. Yet not so free as before, since a father, who had no one but her, claimed her, and she found that to please him she must interest herself in re-furnishing and repairing the Castle. Those fabulous lacs of rupees effected this in an incredibly short space, and it was soon ready to receive Miss Walpole, and such of Sir George's friends and acquaintances as were desirous to see him and the country-maiden so unexpectedly announced as his daughter.

It was spring when she took up her abode with her father; for, in spite of many longings on her part, and sad regrets at Brynhafod, this she naturally did. Not that she was actually separated from her first and dearest friends, since she saw them daily; still the Miss Walpole of Craigavon Castle was different from the Daisy Pennant of Brynhafod, and she sighed as she felt it. She strove not to let this appear, however, but

"Shaped herself, with woman's meekness,
To all duties of her rank."

And, although always simple, her nature and education enabled her to do this with little or no effort.

She found the Castle much changed. Sir George had brightened up the old furniture without spoiling it, under the auspices of Adam Perceval, and had added appropriate new. Oak panellings and carvings had been cleaned, and tarnished gildings restored. All was habitable; and the apartments in which they were to live were snug and comfortable. The Countess's boudoir was alone unchanged. Sir George was particular in seeing that the servants' offices were improved, and the stabling perfected; for he, like the Pennants, was as tender of the brute creation as of the human, and was wont to say, "Woe to them who are not!" Your true Christian soldier is ever merciful. The dungeon was bricked up, the vaults closed, and the cellars replenished. The lacs of rupees that still remained were to be spent in hospitality to rich and poor, and when Daisy came in contact with the former, she did not lose her dignified simplicity. When with the latter, she maintained her cheerful and natural loving-kindness.

We have said that she was a capital horsewoman; and when her father and she began to ride together, and she displayed, not only her good horsemanship, but her exceeding grace of figure and beauty of face, all his friends and acquaintances expressed wonder that one so refined should have been bred at a farm.

"Blood will tell; and besides, the Pennants are superior people, and of old family," was the opinion expressed.

She did not hear it, and it would not have influenced her if she had. Whether on horseback or on foot, her desire was to make Sir George acquainted with the beauty of her dear Wales, and the wants of its peasantry; and this she gradually satisfied.

One morning in May, a few weeks after her location at the Castle, her father and she returned on horseback from one of these exploring expeditions. As she dismounted, her face

flushed, and a nosegay of heath-flowers in her hand, presented to her by one of her school-children, it was no wonder if, not only Sir George, but his servants, looked at her admiringly. As she had had a winning smile and kind word for all at the farm, so she still had at the Castle, and she was in danger of being more spoilt than ever. Father and daughter went together through the great hall, up the great staircase, and into a pretty room that Sir George had re-furnished for Daisy. It looked towards the Esgair, and was bright and sunny that May morning. Daisy began at once to put her nosegay in water, while Sir George watched her. He seemed never to tire of looking at or embracing her. The new habit he had bought her became her figure well, and he thought she could not have been lovelier had she been bred in a palace.

"I am afraid we must delay the beacon yet awhile," he began; "I find it would cost more than I can pay at present. What have you next on your list, my dear love?"

"Oh, sir! my list is that long!" replied Daisy, widening her arms, as she held a flower in each hand. "But the beacon takes up the greatest space. If only it could be built for Carad's sake, as well as to save from shipwreck."

Sir George perceived that she coloured as she said "Carad."

"In the course of a few years, darling. But what keeps Carad from the Castle? He is a proud young fellow."

"Oh, no, sir! he fears to intrude, I think," blushed Daisy. "Next to the beacon, I have the vicarage," she added, hastily.

"I have anticipated you there, darling. I have given orders for the restoration of the vicarage; but I suppose I cannot command the banns and ceremony?"

"Dear sir, how kind you are!" said Daisy, dropping her gorse, and laying her hand on Sir George's shoulder. "They have waited so long, and so patiently! May they be married from here, and live here until the house is ready?"

Sir George laughed heartily.

"I should think they had better return to Tudor's mother," he said. "She has a roomy abode enough. Still, they shall

come here, if you wish it. You may shelter the parish, darling."

"You will do that, dear sir. The poor people bless you already, and the inhabitants of Monad have promised Michael and me to turn over a new leaf, if you will repair their miserable huts. They say they cannot be good in such dwellings."

"There again I have anticipated you, for I mean to root up wrecking and wreckers, and have taken measures accordingly. What do you say to the Master as monarch of Aran Tower, and steward of Craigavon? He tells me he has a fancy for the Tower and the observatory, and I think it may be made habitable. Young Tudor has given up the stewardship, and the Vicar thinks his mother may continue to live on where she is, with a little help. I have offered her the house for her life, and asked Adam Perceval to be steward. There is a piece of news for you!"

"The Master to live in that gloomy Twr Aran? And what will become of Evan, and poor old Betto?" asked Daisy, thoughtfully. "He may do a good work in their place, but they are old and feeble."

"And of evil repute," continued Sir George. "I hear from Carad that Evan and Davy Jones, and some few others of your friends and Michael's, must be looked after sharply; and the Master promises to do it, with much pleasure. But they shall not starve, though they are a bad lot, and have already volunteered disclosures to me concerning the Earl, for which I longed to punish them. The stories already in circulation concerning his lordship are horrible. Adam Perceval laughs when I try to stop the people's mouths, and says—'As well try to check a watercourse.' But he adds—'Let me have Twr Aran all to myself, and it shall go hard with me if I don't put an end to wrecking, at Craigavon at least."

It may be as well to say here that when Lord Craigavon had left the country, and it was known that he did not mean to return to it again, tongues, hitherto fear-bound, were loosed, and rumours floated about much to the Earl's discredit.

"Have you any other reforms in your eye, Daisy?" resumed Sir George, after a brief interval.

"You are thinking me too presuming, sir, and jesting with me," she answered. "But Michael and I sadly want a new school-house, and Mr. Tudor quite agrees with us. He enters into everything with all his heart since he has been free to do as he likes. And he says he knows the parish would help to build it, as well as to restore the church and vicarage. You know father is churchwarden, and would set it all going. Oh! sir, he and grandfather and all of them are as happy as the day is long, now that they are sure of living all their life at the farm."

"When will you be able to give me that dear name as naturally as you do them, my darling?" asked Sir George.

"Oh! sir, it will come. But you seem such a grand gentleman to me who have been brought up at Brynhafod," said Daisy, going nearer Sir George, who put his arm round her waist, and drew her towards him.

"I am far less grand than your friends at the farm, my love. Theirs is a grandeur independent of position or circumstances. Even Carad has not been spoiled by his good looks and education. Can you tell me why he is so anxious to leave the country?"

Daisy started, and turned pale at this abrupt question.

"I did not know he was anxious," she stammered, turning her head away. "I thought he had settled to remain at Penruddock. It would kill poor mother!"

"He says, on the contrary, that now Michael is well, and nothing the matter at home, he feels that he is not wanted, and even asks me to help him to a foreign appointment."

Sir George felt Daisy tremble as he held her, and thought he heard her heart throb; but she spoke calmly, and almost proudly, as she rejoined—

"He has always wished to travel. He is ambitious, and has never taken kindly to a country life since he lived so long in London. He will be happier abroad, I dare say."

"Have you and he quarrelled, Daisy? You scarcely seem at home together, as brother and sister should."

"He no longer treats me as a sister, since I have been your daughter, dear sir, but as some strange and grand lady, from whom he must keep at a distance. Indeed, my only grief is that they all feel this, more or less, though I strive to be humbler than when I was the 'proud miss' of the farm, as the Monads called me."

"I perceive that, love, for you had sometimes a haughty look that you have now lost. But surely Carad, of all men, should not think of paltry distinctions. He who saved your life, and has since, under God, saved mine: for I, too, should have been lost with the yacht and crew but for his timely help. I must speak to him about it."

"Oh! pray do not, sir; it would make him more distant still."

Daisy brushed a tear from her eye, while she again moved towards her flowers, Sir George still watching her narrowly as he sat sideways at the table.

"I seem to know you so little, child," he remarked; "indeed I know little of young people generally, but did you—I must ask the question—did you return the affection poor Penruddock bestowed on you?"

Daisy looked at her father, surprised, but not embarrassed.

"Oh! no, sir. At first I disliked him, then I pitied him, now I think of him with sorrow. But I cannot speak of him or of the Earl, their story is so sad, and I never, never forget how I saw them together on the beach."

The recollection of this was always too much for Daisy, and brought a recurrence of the excitement the actual scene had caused her. But she had much self-command, and overcame it.

"My darling, I did not mean to distress you. I would not give you a moment's pain for all the world. You shall have everything you wish—vicarage, school-house, church, wedding even—though I hate weddings—and Miss Manent can come

here at once to prepare; though I would rather have you all to myself."

Daisy laughed, and thanked Sir George, assuring him, at the same time, that she had a little patience, and could wait. Still this was how he began and continued to indulge his new-found treasure.

CHAPTER LII.

CARAD AND DAISY.

DAISY always read Lord Craigavon's letters to her father with interest. But although they gradually became more frequent, and even increased in length, his lordship never named her. Sir George had communicated to him, as shortly as possible, the facts connected with his discovery of their relationship, but the Earl had made no allusion to them. About this time, however, there came a letter, in which strange mention was made of her name. The Earl wrote as follows: "I should be obliged by your asking Miss Walpole to be so good as to dispose of the proceeds of the sale as she may think best." This was all, and it surprised Sir George more than Daisy.

"His repentance is sincere," she thought, "and I am sure I can carry out his wishes;" then she added aloud to her father, "Say that I will, with his lordship's permission, employ it to place a proper beacon on the Esgair. Thus the property of the drowned will save the lives of future sailors, and it can be done at once."

"Whom will you consult?" asked Sir George.

"Carad," she said. "He imagined the lantern, and set it on the rock; he must undertake this."

Caradoc was at once officially summoned by Sir George, who even appointed a "particular consultation."

He came to the moment, and was told that Sir George was out, but had left word that, if he did not return in time, Dr. Pennant was to be shown to Miss Walpole.

"Miss Walpole!" the word always sent poor Caradoc to the North Pole. However, he followed a servant to Daisy's pretty room, who launched forth in praise of his new master and mistress.

"You would think Miss Walpole had always lived in a great house, sir; though I was always saying, when she was with you, as she was a born lady."

Caradoc smiled and sighed, as he was thus reminded of the distance between him and the new Daisy. He found her expecting him and Sir George, and busily engaged in knitting. His manner was stiff and unnatural, and he knew it. Hers was also restrained, though she strove to be herself. She was sitting near an open window, at a table, on which were her knitting-basket and a nosegay of her favourite mountain flowers.

"I was trying to finish grandfather's stockings against you came," she began, as he took a seat at a little distance; "I mean to knit them as I used to do. Have you seen Sir George, Carad? I mean my father; but it is so difficult to call him by that name, after so many years. He was to have been here to meet you."

In spite of Daisy's simplicity, she was much embarrassed, for they had not been alone together since her change of abode. She felt how altered she must seem to him in her elegant, if simple, muslin dress, and that beautiful room! while he—he was just the same to her as ever.

"Evans said Sir George would be in soon," he replied; "I understood I was summoned for a consultation, and feared either he or you were ill."

"It is such a pleasant consultation that I am not afraid to begin it," laughed Daisy, dropping the knitting, and looking at Carad; "it is about a beacon on the Esgair."

"A beacon on the Esgair!" he repeated; and his manner became natural and excited.

"Yes. The Earl has given me permission to use the money gained by that fearful sale as I like. It seems all a

dream, but I want you to build with it a light to replace our old lantern, and Sir—I mean my dear father—will make up any deficiency. Oh, Carad! he is so good and generous. He promises to do everything I wish."

"A lighthouse on the Esgair! And I am to build it! That is a dream fulfilled," cried Caradoc, drawing near her little table, his face flushing with joy.

"Knowing what we do, Carad, I thought it would seem like some slight atonement for the past, and perhaps soften the ill-will of the people, if the poor, sad Earl were to replace the 'Witch's fire' he extinguished."

"Every one knows who the witch was," said Caradoc, meeting Daisy's grave eyes, and bringing a sunbeam into them. "All the country is talking of you, and of our beacon. I think Evan must have told our secret—helped, perhaps, by the Master."

"The Master!" repeated Daisy, restraint suddenly disappearing. "Is it not grand that his great work is so soon to be published? I am prouder of that than of anything."

"Yet not so proud as he is of you," returned Caradoc. "He says his life's book was published when you, his pupil, were the acknowledged daughter of his friend—above all, of that friend's wife."

"He loved my mother," ejaculated Daisy, her head drooping pathetically. "How strange and solemn is love! The only things the Earl took with him from this huge Castle were the portraits of her ladyship—Lady Mona—and Lord Penruddock. It pains me to see the marks they have left on the wall."

"Oh, Daisy!" said Caradoc, sympathetically; and it was the first time he had so called her since her change of fortune.

She looked up and smiled, then hastily began to discuss the project of the beacon. Caradoc had, she knew, long studied the capabilities of the spot for a lighthouse, and had even drawn the plans. Reserve wore off as they talked over their darling scheme; and as it gradually disappeared, and nature

resumed her sway, they were boy and girl again, climbing the heights, lighting the Esgair fire, catching and riding the mountain pony, and even driving the cattle a-field with Ben *bach*.

"Marget told me you were in the dairy, yesterday, and declared the butter was ill-made," said Caradoc.

"So it was," laughed Daisy; "but Marget did not dare to call me disparaging names. She only tossed her head, as much as to say, 'If you were Daisy, now, I'd be putting you down! But, Miss Walpole, *ach yn wir*.'"

They both laughed heartily.

"They are all lost without you, even though they tell me you come every day," said Caradoc. "Indeed, the house is desolate; but you—you are happy."

"Yes; for, thanks to my new and dear father, I can now make others happy. But he says you are unhappy, and wish to leave home. You cannot go until you have made the beacon. Why must you go at all, Carad?" asked Daisy.

"Because I dare not remain," he replied, gazing through the window, as if looking for the Esgair, and listening to the wild sea beneath. "I shall be better away until I can realize that you are a great lady, and I only a farmer's son."

These simple words made Daisy start, flush, look at his kind, sad face, and clasping her hands, exclaim,—

"If that is why you go, I would I were again a farmer's daughter!"

The words had scarcely left her lips when she wished them recalled. She meant by them nothing forward, nothing unwomanly. Caradoc was her hero, tenfold grander than herself, and she only wished him to think that she would fain be humbler than he.

But he was even more heroic than she thought, for he was desirous to overcome the love of a life, because she had suddenly risen to a state beyond his own. He rose hastily and went to the window, her eyes following him. Neither spoke, but the heaving sea and its elastic breeze spoke for them.

Daisy's words tempted him sorely, and she little knew the

effect they had. They inspired a sudden hope that, after all, she loved him best, dashed by the recollection that, even if she did, he could not ask Sir George Walpole's daughter to be his wife. Caradoc had a strong and noble mind, and he could not tempt Daisy, though she was very dear to him, to do anything unbecoming her new station, or displeasing to her lately-found parent. They seemed to understand one another, by some sudden intuition, for the first time, and the thought uppermost in the heart of both was that they earnestly wished Daisy to be again the hidden mountain flower, and not transplanted to the Castle.

When Caradoc turned from the window, he saw that there were tears in the eyes of her he loved so dearly, and she perceived an unusual sadness in his face. But he only said,—

"I will set to work about the beacon at once, so that, if I go abroad, I may have the happiness of thinking that we have been associated in this good work with the unfortunate Earl; and you, when you see it, may perhaps think of me."

"I shall not need the beacon to think of you, Carad," she replied gravely, letting her tears fall quietly upon her folded hands. "Have we not been as brother and sister ever since you carried me, a little child, from the yawning sea to our happy home? I wish we had never left it, either you or I, though, doubtless, our ways have been shaped for us."

"If I were really your brother, or could calmly look on you as a sister, as Michael says he does, my way would be plain," returned Caradoc. "I should then be thankful that my sister was raised to a position where she may shine, as a light on a hill, through her clear purity and good works; while I, in my humble valley, could also do my work in His vineyard who has called us to labour for Him. But I cannot do this. I am always thinking of you, and shall as long as I am near you, with a sad regret that I am not your equal in fortune or position; that it is my duty to treat you as one far above me in all social distinctions; and that I am passing the bounds of respect if even I call you by the dear familiar name of Daisy."

"Grandfather still calls me his Eye of Day, and so do the others," argued Daisy, humbly. "Only Marget now never forgets to put the Miss before it, and Michael sometimes says he ought to put it, but he does not. Why are you so different? —you who my father and the Master sometimes say should be heir of all, if right were right?"

"That is a myth of the Master's, who has puzzled out our old pedigree at last," said Caradoc, smiling. "I suppose Pennants ruled the land in British days, and Penruddocks in Norman; but now, we have the English Walpole, and long may he reign over us, and you, his heiress and successor."

Caradoc's tone changed, as he spoke, from its natural frankness to a certain haughtiness, which it sometimes took when the subject of his really ancient lineage turned up. But the old manner returned when he saw that he had distressed Daisy.

"Forgive me," he said, "if I seem foolish; I never wished for rank or power until you left our poor home, and came to this lordly place. All I have desired, hitherto, has been to benefit my fellow-creatures, but now I would climb any height that should bring me to your level. But I dare not talk to you thus, and you must not tempt me by your humility."

He paused, and as he glanced at her with the light of a pure, unselfish love in his eyes, her tears fell faster and faster. At this moment the door opened, and Sir George Walpole came into the room.

CHAPTER LIII.

A FATHER'S LOVE.

ALTHOUGH Daisy did her best to brush off her tears when her father entered, he soon saw that something was amiss, and shrewdly suspected the cause. But he was too wise to interfere in what might possibly have been a lover's quarrel. He, therefore, tried at once to set the young people at their ease by beginning the subject of the beacon. Caradoc recovered first; and when he had detailed his long-matured designs, Sir George told him to get the advice of an architect and engineer, and to begin to carry them out without delay, promising to make up all deficiency in funds. But Daisy did not join in the conversation at all. She had enough to do to stay the course of her tears, and, by way of concealing them, took up her knitting.

"Has Daisy told you that we are to have a wedding?" asked Sir George, when the discussion was over. "No! then I must announce it. The Vicar has obligingly consented to take Miss Manent 'for better, for worse,' and they are to be married from here. As I hate weddings, I think of going away till it is over. Will you come with me? Then Daisy will have it all her own way."

"Oh, sir!" exclaimed Daisy, roused at once. "You are to give the bride away, and Carad must be best man."

"Is that how you mean to nail us both?" said Sir George. "But I cannot promise. The only wedding I shall feel it my duty to attend is yours, and then it would be on condition that you did not leave me."

He glanced from her to Caradoc, and perceived that they both coloured.

"Oh, sir! how can you?" she said, bending over her knitting.

"What do you say, Carad?" he continued. "Have I not a right to keep her for the rest of her life, having had so little of her heretofore? And would not my son-in-law be cruel if he insisted on taking her from me? I could not live without my treasure, now I have secured her."

"Indeed, sir, she should never leave you," replied Caradoc, summoning courage to give the expected answer, yet scarcely knowing what he meant; "she could ill be spared from the people who love her so well, and the place where she has grown up."

"That was Brynhafod," interrupted Sir George. "I must keep her in this less cheerful old Castle—which, however, we will make bright enough by-and-by, with weddings, and feastings for the poor, and all the charities—will we not, my darling?"

He laid his hand on Daisy's shoulder, who looked up at him through the tears, but could not speak.

Caradoc rose to go, and Sir George did not detain him. When Daisy also rose to take leave of him, she said, with her usual simplicity,—

"Give my love to mother, and all at home."

Sir George accompanied Caradoc from the room, and, when they were gone, Daisy laid her head on the table, and let her tears flow unrestrained.

When the gentlemen reached the great passage, Sir George told Caradoc that he wanted a few words with him, and took him into the late Countess's sitting-room. Caradoc feared that he was to be questioned and reproached for Daisy's tears, so he was not surprised when Sir George began, in his straightforward way, to speak of them and her.

"Have you and Daisy quarrelled?" he asked. "She was in tears when I joined you, and I cannot have her weep. If I

can prevent a recurrence of such emotion, tell me, and I will do it."

"We had not quarrelled, sir. We seldom quarrelled in the old days; now I should not venture——" began Caradoc, and paused.

"I think I understand you," supplied Sir George. "You are too much of a gentleman to take advantage of the old relations that existed between you, now that Daisy is mistress here. Yet no efforts of yours or mine can wipe out the past, and I, for one, should not wish to do it. You and yours have saved and brought up my darling, and given a home to my friend. It is now my turn to protect them both, but not to sever the tighter ties; on the contrary, I wish still more firmly to unite them. We owe a debt to you that we can never repay; but you may, perhaps, make it heavier still by insuring my child's happiness, and therewith mine. You love her, Carad?"

"If I love her! Oh! sir, who could help it?" said Caradoc, surprised into a confession.

"Then you have my permission to tell her so. Wait! Don't thank me yet. If the tears I saw meant what I suspect, I must have a promise from you before you dry them. You must live here with me; you must be content to be second in command, if first in love, while I live, and then the Pennants will come to their own again."

Caradoc stood a few minutes looking at Sir George, so bewildered by what he had said that he could neither believe nor understand it. But Sir George understood it all; he read the long-suppressed love in the flushed face and speechless lips; and, when Caradoc at last found words, he knew that he had not misjudged him.

"I am not deserving of this," he said, "either in myself or my condition. But I have loved her always, with the one great love of my heart. Still, even with your generous permission, I dare not hope; she has never encouraged me; she has rather seemed to love another best. This is why I have wished to go away."

"I understand all this. But you have not given me your promise," rejoined Sir George.

"I could desire nothing better in this world, sir, than what you so generously, so strangely propose," stammered Caradoc, scarcely knowing what he said.

"Then return to Daisy, tell her so, and dry those tears," said Sir George.

The bewildered Caradoc found Daisy as we left her, with her fair head on her arm. She was still sobbing, and did not hear him come in. He went up to her quietly, and whispered "Daisy." He did not dare to touch her even then. She started up, and strove to appear calm. But this was as impossible to her as to him.

"Daisy—dear Daisy," he repeated. "Sir George, your father, permits me to call you so. Will you forgive my pride, and bear with me for our childhood's sake?"

It was now her turn to be puzzled, and to say in her simple way,—

"Oh! Carad, you know I wish you to call me Daisy."

She looked at him with a certain shy dignity, as if to say it is you who stand off and are changed. She read something in his face which brought the colour to hers. But he was still diffident and mistrustful of himself, and even then remembered those others whom he believed she had preferred to him; especially the thought of Michael gave him a sudden pang, for in what sweet will not true love mix a bitter? However, he summoned courage at last, and "told his love."

"It was from the moment when I came home, and saw you under the mistletoe," he said, summoning courage, as the tale developed. "It has been deepening, strengthening ever since, but would never have been declared had not your father detained me just now, and told me to dry your tears. Oh! Daisy *fach*, if only I could do so now, now and for ever."

Daisy's head had been drooping lower and lower, while tears and smiles had been striving together in her face, and her heart beating far faster than its wont. She looked up, frankly,

at the familiar term of endearment, so expressive in Welsh, and the smile overcame the tears. It spread over her countenance like a sunbeam.

"Now we are as we used to be once more," she said, holding out both hands. "Carad, will you never be cold again?"

"Not as we used to be, Daisy," said Caradoc, taking the hands. "We can never, never, more be as brother and sister if your love is the love I ask."

"It has been yours, and yours only, from childhood till now," said Daisy, shyly, but decidedly.

He was satisfied; and we leave it to the imagination to paint how he "dried her tears."

CHAPTER LIV.

TWO WEDDINGS.

ONCE upon a time it was the pleasant fashion to wind up a story with a wedding—we will follow and improve upon it, and wind up this with two.

Sir George said that since Caradoc and Daisy had let him settle their affairs, they should settle the Vicar's. Miss Manent was accordingly invited to the Castle, where, with Daisy's aid, her *trousseau*, or, as the Welsh call it, *stafell*, was provided. Meanwhile, Mr. Tudor, helped by Sir George and the Pennants, superintended the restoration of the vicarage. They were married some little time before Daisy, as she wished to keep her promise concerning the bridesmaid and best man, posts which she and Caradoc filled honourably. Sir George gave the timid bride away, and invited her husband's friends to the wedding feast. When she and the Vicar drove off in his carriage, it was Daisy who threw the old shoe after them and said to Sir George,—

"She doesn't think herself married even now."

The peasantry were demonstrative enough at the marriage of their pastor, and rang the bells, and shouted vigorously; but it yet remained to be seen what they were really capable of. The kindly, hospitable, impressionable Welsh, sympathise with all the births, marriages, and deaths that happen in their midst. They had wept over Lord Penruddock's untimely death, they were ready to rejoice at Caradoc Pennant's wedding. And they did rejoice with a will; for not only were he and his family especial favourites, but they were genuine ancient Britons, with blood untainted by alien streams. Moreover,

though centuries had passed since Craigavon Castle had belonged to a Pennant, it had belonged to one; and Caradoc was a deserving descendant, who would succeed, in right of his wife, to the property. He would not make the worse landlord, they argued, because his forefathers had tilled and enriched the soil he was to own. And then Daisy had been bred amongst them, and would be the most generous of mistresses; and as to Sir George, he was winning golden opinions.

So the rusty cannon were hauled forth from the Castle, and placed upon the rocks over the sea; bonfires were laid on the hills; arches of evergreens and flowers erected from ancient Castle to ancient church; and all was done that affectionate hearts could do to show love and loyalty to the present owner of Craigavon.

On the auspicious morning, Daisy was aroused by the sound of the cannon, and her first thought was that she was soon to be, in very deed, a Pennant; her next that grandfather had, after much entreaty, consented to come to the Castle.

The old church was a goodly sight that day. Crowds of peasants, in holiday garb, filled it and the graveyard, amongst whom were the improved and improving inhabitants of Monad. Evan the Tower, and Davy Jones the wrecker, and many another of equally evil repute, were there, and Daisy and Michael's school-children lined the way. A huge miscellaneous crowd of people it was, ready to make merry and rejoice.

Great was the shouting when all the Pennants arrived. The old man, white with years; David, stalwart and hearty again; his wife, round-faced and open-eyed as ever; Michael, pale but glad; the Master in a brand-new suit; and Caradoc, proud indeed, as bridegroom-elect. They had all walked quietly over the hill, and arrived early. They were soon succeeded by the carriages from the Castle.

"Is grandfather here?" asked Daisy, as she walked through the crowds, leaning on her father's arm.

When she saw the old man's silvery head, she was happy, for she knew no one else would fail.

The marriage was as impressive as it was simple. Carad and Daisy, loving well, and well beloved, were united by a friend interested in them from childhood, and surrounded by people whose warm hearts beat in sympathy with theirs, and whose prayers ascended to heaven for their future well-doing and being.

"Our *Llygad y dydd* do look beautiful, indeed, and quite the lady! There's grand her white satin dress and lace veil is!" whispered one spectator to another. "True for you; but not grander or handsomer than Cradoc Pennant. Sure, there's lucky the Pennants are! but no more than they deserve!" responded another. "Sir George is a fine man, too, considering. I was thinking it was to be Michael; but Cradoc's fittest," volunteered a third. "He's as tall as the Earl, and a sight handsomer, and he do look you in the face."

And so it was, here as elsewhere—"The king is dead. Long live the king!"

There was a mighty shout when the bride and bridegroom threaded the crowds to the carriage.

Daisy responded to the "God bless them!" with nods and smiles, and was even stayed in her path to shake hands with one or two old people. Davy Jones was especially persistent, and planted himself on his sticks at the gate, in order to say, as she passed—"On my deed, I'm a-going to be religious, Miss *fach*," an assurance which gave Daisy unfeigned pleasure.

"You should be saying 'your ladyship,' now," said old Betto the Tower, who was planted hard by, in spite of the rheumatics.

When the grand carriage, with the four white horses and wedding favours, drove off, it was Sir George's turn to be busy, and the comments and shouts redoubled.

"That's what I'm calling a gentleman! See you how he is arming Mrs. Pennant to his carriage; and there's careful he is of the old man," said one.

"And look you at David Pennant Brynhafod, and Michael! all going into the Castle carriages. Sir George deserves to be a Welshman!" said another.

"We shall be knowing where to go for help in hard times," suggested a fisherman's wife. "He says he'll do for all as choose to live respectable."

"He was telling me so himself," remarked Evan, with the manner of a martyr. "And, says I, a man couldn't be a man with his lordship the Earl."

Sir George did, indeed, show himself a loving father, and generous benefactor on his daughter's wedding-day. Good and bad, well-clad and ill-clad, were alike invited to the festivities he prepared; and the Castle was once more the scene of rejoicings. Mountains and rocks re-echoed to the merriment of the peasantry and sea-farers, while the boisterous spring-tide leapt for joy. It was just such a bracing day as Carad and Daisy loved; and when they reached the Castle, they stood a few moments to listen to the merry church bells, the shouts, the music, and the waves, as they mingled in a chorus of distant sound.

"It seems all a dream," whispered Daisy, her beautiful face flushing through her veil.

"It shall grow into a reality as time goes on," replied Caradoc, pressing the dear hand he held. "And we will strive to be faithful and true to your father and to God."

With these words they entered the Castle, henceforth to be their home.

CHAPTER LV.

CONCLUSION.

MUCH good sprang out of much evil in the manor of Craigavon. Sir George Walpole, aided by his son-in-law and daughter, set to work earnestly to repair the ills the Earl had done. As the young people knew the root of all these ills, by their experience of Lord Craigavon's practices, they were able to advise the now too-liberal lord of the manor; and as the main object of the trio was to do good, they found little difficulty in effecting it. The beacon on the Esgair was naturally their first great work, and this they were particular in publishing as the Earl's memorial to his drowned son. As time went on, and the work progressed, they received intimations from his lordship that he would maintain it when completed; and Caradoc had the happiness of seeing his rough contrivance replaced by a small but efficient lighthouse on the Esgair. This, and Sir George's stringent measures, gradually put a stop to the atrocious practice of wrecking, and enabled ships to pass the quicksands safely. The fishermen's huts at Monad were either repaired, or abandoned for better dwellings; and they were induced to lead more respectable lives, partly from fear, partly from interest or inclination. This desirable change was much aided by Adam Perceval, who took possession of Twr Aran. Doors and glass windows turned the Tower into a habitable dwelling; and the Master as commander-in-chief, with Caradoc as frequent inspector, made good use of the telescopes originally placed there for nefarious practices. Instead of looking out for wrecks, they watched to prevent them. In this tower, once the storehouse of theft, and the resort of rats and

mice, literary and scientific work went on, and the Master's first book was followed by others, in which the name of Caradoc Pennant not unfrequently figured.

The vicarage was also a bulwark against bad practices. As it was near the Tower, and overlooked the defile leading to the sea, Mr. Tudor was enabled to help Adam Perceval. He and his wife worked together to repair his somewhat desultory past; and the once timid Miss Manent became a very Gorgon of a Vicaress—forcing recreant mariners to church, hauling their children to school, and seeing that the Sabbath was well kept. They had, moreover, by-and-by, a house full of children of their own to teach and feed, and David Pennant was wont to say that the Vicar was making up for lost time in more ways than one.

As to Brynhafod, it continued the even tenor of its way. David Pennant, as churchwarden, helped by Sir George and the parish generally, repaired the fine and ancient church, and before old Mr. Pennant was laid quietly to his rest in the secluded graveyard, he had the happiness of seeing it re-opened for Divine service. Michael continued his labours as lay preacher and teacher, and his powers of usefulness increased with his health. He went less often to the Castle than its inmates wished; but there is no doubt that his love for Daisy had become, in truth, only that of a brother.

Few days passed, however, that he and Daisy did not meet. She was constant in her visits to the farm and school, regular in her ministrations to the poor. She might be seen, at all hours and in all weathers, as of old, breasting the sea and mountain breezes, either on foot or horseback, and usually on errands of mercy or on visits to her friends at Brynhafod, the vicarage, or the Tower. Sometimes her husband, or father, or both, were with her, and sometimes she was alone; but whether accompanied or solitary, she was blessed wherever she went. When she had children of her own, her desire was to bring them up as simply and religiously as she had been herself brought up, and in this she was seconded by Sir George and Caradoc.

Let it not be supposed that these gentlemen led idle lives. It is as hard work to spend money well as to earn it, and they both laboured for the former end. Sir George soon became as popular with his equals as his inferiors, and Caradoc took rank with him. The latter devoted much time to the poor, and to the patient study of how best to ameliorate their condition. He became a magistrate, and was celebrated through the country for his justice as well as gentleness. Knowing the language well, he was able to sift right from wrong, which it was often difficult, even for the best-intentioned of his coadjutors, less apt at Welsh, to do. He was recognised by such as were troubled with aristocratic pride, as a Pennant, and the lineal descendant of the last owner of Craigavon of that name, and accordingly admitted into the sacred circle of exclusive society. When, in the course of years, he was urged by rich and poor to stand for his native county—an honour declined by Sir George Walpole—he was not unprepared for the office pressed upon him. He had been born and bred amongst the people he was asked to represent, and was thoroughly acquainted with them, their customs, prejudices, and above all, their wants. Although he said to Daisy that the honour was "thrust upon him," and undeserved, she did not think so; and with wifely pride, and reverence for the qualities she knew he possessed, she, as well as her father, urged him to accept the offered responsibility. He did so very diffidently; and when he was returned as member of Parliament, with little or no opposition, the cry of his countrymen was, "Well done! A Pennant is the right man in the right place!"

After this brief sketch of the most important part of life, some may ask, "And what of the Earl of Craigavon and his daughter?" So little was known that there is little to tell. His lordship led the life of a recluse on his Scotch estate, visited from time to time by the Lady Mona, but never by her husband. Her ladyship kept up a desultory correspondence with Daisy, and she always alluded to her father, saying that he was silent and sad, and did not recover from her brother's loss. She con-

tinued to reside in London, and appeared tolerably happy. She had no children, and she and the Earl were therefore the last of their race. He was still reputed a miser by the multitude; but his successors at Craigavon Castle, his daughter and one or two others, believed that he was striving in his solitude to atone for the past; while God, who "seeth not as man seeth," alone knew that the fearful judgment with which He had visited him resulted in a life-long and heart-broken repentance.

THE END.

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